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THE GOSPEL
ACCORDING TO
SAINT PAUL

BY

W. P. DU BOSE, M.A., S.T.D.

The Soteriology of the New Testament
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WILLIAM PORCHER DUBOSE, M.A., S.T.D.

AUTHOR OF "THE SOTERIOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT," "THE ECUMENICAL COUNCILS," "THE GOSPEL IN THE GOSPELS"; PROFESSOR OF EXEGESIS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH

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TO

S. P. D.

IN TOKEN OF VALUABLE SERVICE IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS VOLUME.

31382

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I

INTRODUCTION

I

INTRODUCTION

In advocating and pressing any particular point of view, one is inevitably liable to press it unduly and at the expense of other points of view. In the quest of truth this danger ought not to be too much of a deterrent to either freedom of thought or boldness of expression. The ultimate aim of each one of us should be not to save ourselves from error but to advance the truth. We may safely rely upon it that our truth will in the end be accepted and our error corrected. If I had been too much afraid of going wrong I should have made no progress in growing right; — who of us that has really thought or spoken may not say that of himself? For my own part, I have not merely traditionally believed but become personally convinced that there is a truth of the Scriptures and that there is a mind of the Church; and that each of these will take care of itself as against the infinite errors and vagaries of individual thinkers and writers. I have in my mind not only an implicit faith but a rational science or philosophy of these things, which at least satisfies myself and gives me security and rest from the fear of even my own shortcomings or too-far-goings. I do

not hesitate to say then, on the one hand, that I hold what I hold subject to the revision and correction of the deeper truth of the Scriptures and the larger wisdom of the Church; and, on the other hand, that, leaving to these their function of final acceptance or rejection, I conceive it to be my duty to the truth, and my best service to them, to think the thoughts and express the conclusions, as best I may, which I have found to be to myself their own best interpretation.

The particular method which, after a lifetime of study and reflection, I have found to be the best for entering into the meaning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or into the meaning of Jesus Christ as Himself the immediate Word or Gospel of God, may be brought out by a parallelism or analogy between the independent and very different treatments of St. Paul and St. John. The starting-point, and standpoint all through, of St. John's interpretation of our Lord is best expressed in the words, The Life was manifested. The Life had been manifested first to the outward eye and then to the inward vision of a few; and it was the mission of these few so to declare and present it to all others that they too might know and enter into and share it. St. John, both in his Gospel and in his Epistles, acts upon the true Aristotelian principle that in every investigation of reality the fact or the actual (τὸ ὅτι) is the proper starting-point (ἀρχή). The fact which is the starting-point in this case is the simple objective truth that Jesus Christ is the Life. That is fact in

itself, independently of any external dogmatic affirmation or logical demonstration of it. And it is, if fact in itself, then fact verifiable in itself; for truth, if allowed to do so, always can and always will prove itself. And this is truest of what is to us the ultimate truth, the truth of Life and of ourselves, God's truth of us. Wisdom, which is knowledge of God's truth, is justified of her children. There *is* the Life — human life in all the fulness of its meaning and divine reality. There is the Truth — the Life expressed and manifested, something not only ideal or potential but actual, not only vision or shadow or symbol but eternal substance. There is the Way: Life, human life at least, God's life in us, cannot come just so, out of hand, by immediate *fiat* or creation from without. It can come only in conjunction, in reaction, in conflict and strife with human environment as it is and with all human conditions as they are. Jesus Christ is not only the truth or reality of life; He is the way of it to us, and He is so only as Himself our own true way of life.

Life can be lived by ourselves, and our Lord's life was lived, only in and through the mastery of the one true way of human life, by practical solution of the meaning, the reason, and the use of all actual human conditions. In this world none of us can escape its conditions, or be saved otherwise than by discharging its inevitable tasks. Only through conquest of the world, the flesh, and the devil may we attain unto life eternal. But we have His parting assurance, In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good

cheer, I have overcome the world. The overcoming was His way and ours: He drank the cup and was baptized with the baptism which we must drink and be baptized withal, if we would be where and what He is. In leading us all to glory, it behooved God to make the author of our salvation perfect through the sufferings which are the conditions and the means of our own perfection and salvation. The point to be emphasized is, that our salvation, in all the conditions, means, and way of it, was first enacted or wrought out in the personal human experiences and life of our Lord. He is in fact to us the Way: no man can come to God, and so to himself and to life, save through Him.

Thus St. John saw Jesus Christ as The Life; the truth or reality or actuality of it, as distinguished not only from its falsities, but from its mere dreams or shadows; the way of it, as including and involving all its conditions and causes, all its necessary means and processes. Precisely analogously, though not with the contemplative, poetic vision of St. John, but rather with his own more active and practical insight, St. Paul sees Jesus Christ as not so much our Life as our Righteousness. He regards salvation less in the accomplished fact than in the accomplishing act or process; in the making rather than in the made product. St. Paul does indeed see in our Lord Himself a process completed, but in the joy of the completion he never forgets or loses sight of the process; in all the glory of what our Lord is as man, the important thing to remember is the one lifelong human act of faith and

obedience through which He became the man He is. Life, and therefore salvation, is indeed an act, a life-long act or activity, a process of self-actualizing or becoming ourselves. Life can be lived, or self realized, only as they are so rightly, in accordance with their own meaning and reason and law. That is what the whole Bible means when it so emphatically and persistently proclaims that rightness or righteousness alone is life, that he who obeys the law shall live by it, and he who violates it shall die by it. It is a universal and necessary fact in itself that life, blessedness, or salvation is to be found in nothing else than in right being and right doing.

The first truth with St. Paul, then, is that righteousness is salvation; and the second is that Jesus Christ is righteousness. This determines for us the standpoint from which, I think, we may best interpret the Gospel according to St. Paul. Our task is first to interpret righteousness in itself, as realized and manifested to us in the person of our Lord. It is then, secondly, to learn how that righteousness is to be made ours. The method in a word is this: through the constant appropriating or taking it to ourselves in faith, it is gradually and in the end made or becomes our own in fact. This introduces the fact or principle of the marvellous assimilative and transforming power of faith. Man believes unto salvation — that is to say, unto righteousness and life. Faith in the righteousness and life of Christ assimilates and transforms us into the likeness of Christ's righteousness and life: reflect-

ing as a mirror the glory of the Lord, we are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit.

To understand this new-creative power of faith, we must comprehend something of the complex and comprehensive nature of faith. In the light of the mystery or miracle by which all nature is made ours through the senses, we ought not to halt at that higher mystery whereby God makes Himself our own through faith. After all there is as much of higher naturalness in the latter as there is of lower in the former. Faith is the highest and most distinctive function and activity of the spirit of man. It involves the highest energy not alone of his intelligence but of his affections, his will, his entire selfhood or personality. If we realize even in the lower spheres a truth in such sayings as that: what we think, we are; what we love, we are; what we believe or mean or intend, we are; — how much truer should it be that what our most real self and selfhood concentrates itself upon, attaches and gives itself up to through every spiritual faculty and passion of its nature, that, if we not already are, we most assuredly shall be. This, I repeat, gives a sort of naturalness, if not indeed the highest and truest naturalness, to the truth that we believe unto righteousness or unto life; that faith saves; and that there is no other way of spiritual salvation or of personal self-realization than through faith.

There are those who object to our making salvation, the life of the spirit, the life of religion in general, too natural a process. We cannot kick against the pricks;

the world has begun to make the discovery, and it will not go backward in it, that the natural is God's way. The natural is the rational and the divine. There is no real break between the natural and the supernatural; the one is only the higher or further other. We shall come to see that Adam and Christ are the same Man; that earth and heaven are one continuous life, easy here or there to be made a hell of; that nature and God are one world, too easily divorced and set at enmity, incapable of too close reconciliation or at-onement. Under the prevalence of the modern scientific principle of evolution we have discovered that the great primal truth of God creating is neither denied nor obscured, but is as much as ever not only a possibility but a postulate of thought in what, nevertheless, appears and can appear to Science only as a world self-evolving. Still more shall we need to learn in Jesus Christ and His Church that the greater truth of God redeeming and saving is neither diminished nor obscured by the fact that it is a truth made visible to us only in the phenomenon of a humanity self-redeemed and self-saved. No man hath seen God at any time; if God be in a man, He will be visible in him only in what the man himself is. God was in Christ *sub specie hominis*, not *Dei*. He was here to fulfil and manifest Himself in us and us in Him; not Himself otherwise than in us, or in any other revelation of Himself than as our holiness, righteousness, and life. That was effected for us objectively, or as an object or end to our faith, in the

person of the Incarnate Word; it is effected subjectively by a power working in us through faith, the power of the Incarnate Spirit. That the personal Spirit of God and the personal character and life of God should be ours through faith is as truly natural an operation and result as that nature's breath and life should be ours through our bodily organs.

Forasmuch then as God was in Christ for the specific purpose and to the specific end of being to us and in us the whole truth of ourselves, of manifesting and imparting to us Himself as our holiness, our righteousness, and our eternal life, it follows that it should be our part to see in Jesus Christ just that as what God wills to reveal, and to accept in Him just that as what God wills to bestow. I say so much in explanation and justification of what will seem to some an undue insistence upon the humanity of our Lord. There will be statements no doubt so one-sided in themselves as, if they stood alone, to endanger or to obscure other no less essential sides of the truth. But I hope it will be seen and felt that they do not stand alone. One such statement I would make clear in the beginning: I lay down the principle that in interpreting the human life and work of Jesus Christ I construe Him to myself in terms of humanity. I make no difference there between Him and us save in the one particular, which is the one Scriptural exception, of His sole perfect sinlessness or holiness, His sole complete and perfect victory over the world, His accomplished task of uniting humanity with God and

so redeeming it from sin and death. That is enough for me as demonstration of our Lord's deity also, enough not alone to enable but to compel the confession that Jesus Christ was as truly more than man as He was also truly man. I bow before not only the work of Jesus Christ as truly God's but the Worker in Jesus Christ as truly God. God's eternal Wisdom and Word which are eternally God's Self were truly incarnate in His person, and wrought with His hands the creed of creeds. I go further and repeat the conviction that, so far as our knowledge and experience can go, nowhere else in all God's universe, in all His infinite and manifold activities, is God so God as in the person and work of Jesus Christ. For in Jesus Christ God is all love, and love of all things is most God.

I might be allowed to use the opportunity to say an additional word upon the subject of discussions such as we are here touching upon. These are times — but, let us remember, not more so than were the earliest and most living ages of Christianity — of thought and speculation, original and independent thought and speculation, upon the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. They are not times of unthinking and unquestioning acceptance of foregone and foreclosed inquiry and investigation. The fact may be condemned and lamented, but no amount of shutting our own or others' eyes and ears to it will make it any the less a fact. The whole truth of Scripture and the whole mind of the Church might surely, one might say, be accepted as being conjointly the ultimate expression to us of

what Christianity is, what constitutes the essential or necessary truth of it. This, however, as a matter of fact, does not end the matter. What is the whole truth of the Scripture, and what is the whole mind of the Church? Some will say, these are things which have been determined for us, and the very reopening them is fatal to the fact or the possibility of any such thing as a catholic truth or unity. Are these questions indeed closed? They may be for those who say they are. But what of the great living, thinking Christian world to which, as a matter of fact, they are not closed? They are tremendously not closed, and tremendously in question. And they are not going to be closed by any possible amount of mere saying or asserting that they ought to be. A few bewildered and weary souls, to escape doubt and in despair of any self-determining power of truth or life in itself, will from time to time seek, and perhaps find, refuge and rest in the quiet places where they are no longer in question and under the assurance that they are infallibly settled. But there is in fact no such rest for a really living and a really thinking world. The whole truth of the Scripture and the whole mind of the Church are not dead but live things. The fact of their being alive and forever obliged to keep themselves alive with a life that is within themselves will not preclude the possibility of their gaining for themselves assent, consent, and agreement; of their attaining even, as every other kind of truth does, a catholic unity and permanence of form and expression, a *quod semper, quod ubique, et quod ab*

omnibus. The fact of truth's being always alive and always in question for its life does not militate against its credit for truth or its tenure of life. And there is every advantage in truth's being under the necessity of being always our truth, and not merely that of other thinkers and of another age.

The initial difficulty before us lies in the want of assurance that there is such a thing possible, such a thing to be sought and found, and to be held in union and unity with all our might, as a truth of the Scripture and a mind of the Church. We need to have and to spread such a conviction; and the best and only way to extend the conviction is that we who share it shall as much as possible act in union and harmony with one another in the common cause of its extension. There is no real unity in which there is not diversity, and in the highest unity there is the utmost diversity. We shall not all agree in the methods or in the infinite details; we shall not all be altogether right; we shall all be wrong in many ways. But for all that, if we are thoroughly agreed that there is a truth of the Scripture to be known and a mind of the Church to be understood and shared, we shall not fail to accomplish great things towards a necessary and a possible result, the divine result of Christian unity. In that spirit, we shall gratefully acknowledge one another's contributions of truth, whatever they may be; and we shall not content ourselves with anathematizing one another's shortcomings or errors, but rather labour in love for mutual understanding and mutual correction and amendment.

If we are to work successfully to the common end, we must learn so to work together as that our very faults and falsities shall, through the sympathetic and co-operating correction and amendment of one another, be made to work together for the common good. In this spirit, I offer all I shall have to say to the furtherance of the common cause of Christian unity, subject to correction by the higher truth of the Scriptures and the larger wisdom of the Church.

The position here taken is, to my mind, independent of any present or future conclusions of scepticism or criticism with regard either to the Scriptures or the Church. I fully recognize not only the function but the necessity of both scepticism and criticism, in their true meaning and use; and I presume neither to limit nor to define these. But the fact will always remain that we receive our Christianity through the Scriptures and the Church, and that these are the tribunal of final resort for determining what Christianity is. Human reason and human experience have a great part too to play in the matter, but that is both later and different. It was not theirs to give us Christianity, but it is theirs to pass upon the question whether Christianity as given is not what it claims to be, the whole truth of ourselves, because the whole truth of God in ourselves. Through them we set-to our own seals that God in Christ is true. But by reason and experience I mean not those of each but those of all, which really means of those who know. The judges of spiritual things are spiritual men.

II

THE PRESUPPOSITIONS OF THE GOSPEL

The Gospel of God, which He promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures. — ROMANS I. 1, 2.

We speak God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God foreordained before the worlds unto our glory. — 1 CORINTHIANS II. 7.

II

THE PRESUPPOSITIONS OF THE GOSPEL

A GOSPEL, to be such, presupposes all the conditions necessary to make it a gospel. A gospel from God to men presupposes on the side of men all the capacities, needs, and desires which are to be gratified and satisfied by it; and on the part of God, the nature, disposition, and power to communicate the satisfactions which compose it. It is impossible, therefore, for a gospel to be a sudden or unexpected thing. The wants it supplies must have pre-existed, and must have developed to the point of preparing an adequate receptivity. And there must have been growing premonition, promise, and expectation of the internal satisfaction from its external source. The infant is not only sensible of its need of nourishment, but equally at once expects it from the mother's breast. The spiritual needs may be of later development than the physical, but it is the spiritual nature of man not only to have needs, but to expect their gratification and satisfaction from God. The human soul must not only have called upon God but have received answers from Him long before the complete response of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What was gospel or fulfilment in Him

must have been from the beginning of spiritual experience, promise, and expectation of Him.

The Gospel as St. Paul knows it presupposes always premonitions and prophecies of itself in the previous history of humanity from the beginning, and especially of Hebrew humanity since Abraham. His recognition of the prophets need not now concern us beyond the universal sense and function of prophecy. In the nature of the thing there must have been prophecy before gospel. There would naturally be most distinctive and developed prophecy along that line of human history on which spiritual consciousness and experience were most emphasized and developed; but in Hebrew history itself there was recognition of prophecy outside itself. We need not make a point of locating or limiting all the inspiration or the prophecy of the world. Wherever in any measure or in any manner the supply of the divine spirit meets and satisfies the demand of the human spirit, there is at least the beginning of inspiration; and wherever there is even a little there is always potency and promise and prophecy of more or of all.

We must, however, insist upon confining our own sense of inspiration to its proper content and its proper source. There are many kinds of inspiration, and many kinds of prophecy; and since all truth and all beauty as well as all goodness is divine, all those through whom at first hand these have come to us have been in a true sense prophets of the divine. But the abstract or impersonal spirit of truth, of beauty, and

even of justice or righteousness, has spoken through many who were strangers and even enemies to the personal Spirit of God. There has been many an inspired poet or artist or philosopher or scientist or even moralist who knew nothing of the inspiration that is either from God or of God. If any man have not the spirit of God he is none of His. And the spirit of God is the Spirit of God. It is no abstract or impersonal, physical or metaphysical, attribute or concept or symbol or influence of Him, — but Himself, in the deepest personal truth of Himself, in us as the deepest personal truth of ourselves. The man himself, the real personality of a man, is not the brilliance of his intellect, or the greatness of his power, or the magnitude of his achievements, — it is "the manner of spirit he is of." When we come to pass judgment upon the man, Julius Cæsar or Napoleon Bonaparte or Bacon or Seneca or Voltaire, all accidental differences disappear, and the common standard applies to them and to the least among us. The spirit of the man is the man, and the spirit that he "is of" is what he is personally in relation with other persons. We are not abstractions ourselves, and our real dealings are not with abstract things — even though it be abstract truth or beauty or duty — but with persons. So God Himself is not wisdom or power or cause or substance, He is not truth or beauty or goodness, — He is Himself, He is God. And God Himself is the Spirit He is of; He is what He is to all other beings, and especially to all other personal beings. Above all other being,

spiritual being is a "being in relation," and in relations. The perfect personal relation is that of perfect Love; and the true physical or metaphysical as well as spiritual definition or expression of God as Personal God is Love. That is Himself, and that is what we have to do with when in the most real sense we speak of such high things as inspiration or prophecy. Inspiration, therefore, as we mean it, is any real communication of the Spirit of God Himself to the spirit of man; and the prophet is he through whom at first hand God Himself speaks to us of Himself. The prophet is thus first, in his own personality, the representative of man to Godward; he is man in the highest reach of his affinity or relationship with God. Above all else, he is prophet, forerunner and preparer, of Him who is more than prophet, — not only man to Godward, but no less God to manward.

The first presupposition of the Gospel, then, in the mind of St. Paul as well as in fact, was God's promise afore by His prophets. The second is expressed in the words "in holy scriptures, or writings." That the pre-existence of the Hebrew Scriptures was humanly and historically a prior condition of the appearance of the Gospel is clear enough. Our Lord regarded Himself as in a sense the product and fulfilment of the Scriptures; although — in a truer sense — He regarded the Scriptures as promise and product of Himself; as the shadow, though cast before, is nevertheless consequence and not cause of the substance that follows after. But the ideas, the principles, the whole

truth as well as expression of the Gospel was so prepared beforehand in the spiritual history and literature of the Jews that it is sufficiently correct to number these among its presuppositions and conditions, with the understanding which we proceed now to present.

If we may say that Christianity was a higher development or a product of Judaism, we must nevertheless recognize it as a case in which the effect so manifestly transcends the cause that we cannot but admit the appearance in it of some new thing, which as much differentiates it from its past as it is identified with it. When, for example, our Lord Himself, as well as all after Him, insists upon interpreting the whole Old Testament Scriptures as a witness beforehand of the truth or principle of the Resurrection, which in its turn is the essence of the Gospel, it is quite legitimate for literary and historical criticism to insist on its part that the prophetic proof of the resurrection in the Old Testament is not a legitimate interpretation of the Old Testament. Indeed it is not, if we intend by it to say, either that the letter of the Old Testament means as much as the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, or that the truth of Christ's resurrection does not transcend any natural expectation of the Old Testament. The fact is, it does so transcend it that the Old Testament proofs of the New Testament facts are, for the most part, from the true standpoint of natural criticism, not interpretations at all, but rather only applications or accommodations. The truth of the New Testament is the meaning of the Old, but it goes beyond that

meaning; just as the great fact of the New Testament is the logical and historical sequent of the events of the Old Testament, and yet transcends the natural order of those events. That the Old Testament did not produce the New is witnessed by the verdict of criticism that the fulfilments of the latter transcend all promises or prophecies of the former. That the Old Testament did, in a sense or degree, produce the New is proved by the fact that criticism cannot find outside of it the antecedent conditions which did produce it. Christianity both was not the product of Judaism and, so far as criticism can discover, was the product of nothing else than Judaism.

Now, to recur to our crucial example, in what sense does, and does not, the Old Testament as a whole bear witness to, promise and prophesy, the resurrection of Jesus Christ? How, for instance, could Bishop Horne, as I believe he did, claim that every psalm in the Psalter might be understood as Messianic, might be interpreted to mean not only Christ but Christ's sufferings and triumph, His death and His resurrection? The answer is that the Psalter is the typical book of human devotion, the intercourse between the soul and its God. Every least saint, every one who believes and prays and receives comfort from God, is in his measure a type and prophecy of the perfect saint, the perfect sanctity which is Jesus Christ Himself, the final victory of faith, hope, and love, the consummated death to sin, sorrow, and death itself, the eternal life in and to God. The burden of the Old Testament is

just that relationship of the personal spirit of man to the personal Spirit of God which first finds its complete expression in Jesus Christ, and finds it in Him through the act and experience of what we call the Cross. So our Lord could see, as each of us can see just in proportion as we see as He saw, with the eyes not of sense but of the spirit, that not alone the Old Testament, but humanity itself, and the whole creation, and God, were full of the truth and meaning of Him. Before Abraham was, or Adam, or the worlds — He is, because He was their meaning in the beginning, and will be their fufilment in the end. But, while even the least saint or sanctity of the Old Testament could be a type and prophecy of the risen Christ, to the extent of being on the line and pointing in the direction of Him — even though the differences might still be far more evident than the likeness — yet none before Him could so express Him, and nothing before it could so prefigure the supreme act of His resurrection, as that it could be literally or visibly true to say that the Old Testament ever rose to the height of the truth of the New. It is perfectly plain to see, with one and all the writers of the New Testament, that they are never trying to construct facts out of the material of the Old, but on the contrary are ever striving to find in the Old the meaning and interpretation of facts which quite as much transcended and confounded as they fulfilled and satisfied its expectations. When once the spiritual mind that responded to Christianity was surprised to enthusiasm with the fulfilments and satisfactions which

it had to offer to that which it was replacing rather than displacing, it was but natural that it should run to extremes, and not only find true interpretations of the new in the old, but endeavour to bend everything in the old to the meaning of the new. And so, I say, many of the proofs and explanations of the New Testament taken from the Old are to be treated not as interpretations but as applications of the ideas, principles, and even the bare language of the latter to the truths and facts of the former. But is there not something remarkable in the way and extent of the applicability of the spirit and the letter of the Old Testament to the New, even where the connection is only application and not genuine interpretation? What other whole history and literature is so applicable to a single fact or event which nevertheless so completely transcends, while fulfilling, its meaning?

In close connection with prophecy and scripture, there is another no whit less vital historical presupposition of the Gospel, and one which St. Paul was much more immediately concerned to reckon with than all the others. That is the Law, which the Gospel, mainly through his own instrumentality, displaced; but displaced only by fulfilling and replacing. There will be so much to say upon the relation of the Law to the Gospel, that the following must suffice in the present connection. There is so much said in St. Paul's presentation of the Gospel of the impotence and consequent superseding of the Law, that we are in danger of forgetting under his seeming disparagement how

much he is really magnifying it. The fact is that the Gospel itself is only the Gospel in so far as it is the true, and the only, fulfilling of the Law. The Gospel is the power to fulfil the Law. And if there had not been first the developed experience and sense of the Law itself and of the necessity of fulfilling it; and then the no less true experience of the impossibility of the Law fulfilling itself in us, or of our fulfilling it in ourselves; and then again the experience of actual transgression and the consequent sense of sin, — if all this had not gone before, there would have been neither truth in itself nor possible meaning for us in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Law, therefore, was the most immediate and essential presupposition of the Gospel; and the Hebrew development of the moral sense and the moral law, the Hebrew passion for righteousness and sense of sin, was the most necessary historical preparation for the advent of the Gospel.

There is one other point upon which, before passing from the historical presuppositions of the Gospel, we must touch, and far more briefly than its importance deserves. The Hebrew contributed to the final religion not only the moral principle of the law, or righteousness, but the spiritual principle of faith, or holiness; which means that in Hebraism there was not only the end of the Law but the beginning of the Gospel. For the transition from one to the other is that from self-righteousness, or obedience of law, to God-righteousness, or the receptivity of faith. Along with and through experience of the insufficiency of the law as a means

of righteousness and life, there is developed faith or dependence in God as the source and power of righteousness and life. Faith is the sense and consciousness and knowledge of God as a person. As such, in the historical antecedents of Christianity, God was known only among the Jews. They gave to it not only the supernatural object — which is God — but the supernatural sense or faculty, which is the condition of knowing God. We must count, then, the Hebrew evolution of faith as not least among the historical presuppositions of the Gospel.

But behind and before all these historical antecedents, the profound philosophic mind of St. Paul recognized yet deeper natural, we might say evolutional, preconditions of the Gospel. The Gospel is conditioned by the very nature of man. It is not only part but chiefest and highest part in God's foreknowledge and predestination of man. We cannot discriminate between the predestination of God and the predestination of nature. What our nature constitutes us to become God has predestined us to be. "Has predestined" or "predestines"; for neither can we distinguish between what God did and does. Beginnings, processes, and ends are all one with Him. His purposes are identical with the actual working of things. Humanity was predestined for the Gospel in the sense that the Gospel, which is Jesus Christ Himself, is the natural — more than natural, supernatural or ultimate highest natural — end or completion, and so predestination, of humanity. Jesus Christ, according to St. Paul, or the

Gospel of the resurrection and eternal life in and through Him, is the end and consummation of the whole creation. In Him, or It, we have the revelation of the mystery or secret of the divine purpose from the beginning. In Him is made manifest the hidden wisdom of God, foreordained before the worlds unto our glory. If the rulers of this world had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. The general meaning of glory in this connection is that final completion of the whole creation in God, to which from the beginning, because in itself and by its divine constitution, it was predestined in man, as man in Christ. Just what the natural predestination of man in Christ is, St. Paul defines to be a predetermination — which in the process of fulfilment is an actual determination — unto sonship through Jesus Christ unto God. In the divine foreknowledge humanity was predetermined to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. So Jesus Christ is the God-appointed, as He is the naturally constituted, heir of all things. In Him man comes into his divinely predetermined, and his naturally as well as divinely determined, inheritance — and in man, as its head, the whole creation.

I touch lightly now upon this Pauline philosophy of the meaning of man and the purpose of God as revealed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, merely to call attention to the fact that to St. Paul the Gospel is no new or disconnected incident or event in the history of humanity or in the course of nature. It is that which,

for the first time, gives fulness of meaning to them both. The true presupposition of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the whole, natural and spiritual, creation of God. It is something before that even, inasmuch as it has its roots in the nature of God Himself, who as Eternal Father is predestined to fulfil Himself in a universal Sonship.

III

THE DEFINITION OF THE GOSPEL

The Gospel — concerning His Son, Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, Who was declared to be the Son of God (*Gr. determined* Son of God) with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead, even Jesus Christ our Lord. — ROMANS I. 3, 4.

III

THE DEFINITION OF THE GOSPEL

THE Gospel may be defined in terms of Jesus Christ, as it stands fulfilled and complete in Him; or it may be defined in terms of ourselves, as we stand in our present relation to it, and as it manifests itself in its present operation in us. St. Paul begins his most perfect exposition of it with a definition from each of these points of view, and we shall devote a chapter to each of these definitions.

The Epistle to the Romans opens with a declaration of the Apostle's separation and devotion to the Gospel of God, which, he says, is concerning, or has to do with, the Son of God. He then expresses his meaning of the Son of God in the following terms: Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was declared to be (Gr. *determined*) the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord. As preparatory to the interpretation of these words, I wish to give a brief exegesis, not of any particular passage or passages, but of the whole mind of St. Paul as to the meaning of the Gospel. Human salvation, which is the burden or content of the Gospel, is accord-

ing to him, not merely the result of, but — *res ipsa* — the thing itself which was wrought by Jesus Christ in and for humanity. He saved humanity by making it, first in Him and then in itself, son of God; thus raising it out of itself and sin and death into God and holiness and life. The essential question involved is this: Is life, in the true sense of it, eternal life, the life which Jesus Christ Himself claims to be and to give, — is that life nature-determined, or self-determined, or God-determined, in us? Jesus Christ — in Himself first, and then in us — means not a nature-determined nor a self-determined but a God-determined life in humanity. He is God our Life, just as He is God our holiness, God our righteousness, etc. That fulness of the life of God first in Jesus Christ and then in humanity through Him is just what makes Him and it Son of God. But the life or the sonship of Jesus Christ is ours only because in Him it is God-wrought in humanity; and He Himself is not only the divine God-working but the human God-worked, the humanity *made*, *become*, son of God. Forever there will be the questioning whether Jesus Christ as our salvation is so actively or passively, *salvatio salvans* or *salvatio salvata*, God saving or man saved, ἔνθεος ἄνθρωπος or ἐνάνθρωπος θεός. Is He the divine grace by which we are saved or the human faith and obedience through which we are saved? Is He God or we in our salvation? The answer must be that He is both, and just that being both is what constitutes the Incarnation.

We have now, however, to take one step further and

show that while the spiritual life of Jesus Christ as human is primarily not a self-determined but a God-determined life, yet secondarily, from the very nature of it, it cannot be God-determined in us — or in Him first — without being, humanly, self-determined also. We cannot remain persons, unless our personality, in its highest activities and life, retain its distinctive property of self-determination or freedom. A purely God-determined life would not be our life. Jesus Christ was not man if he had not a human will and human freedom. And His holiness, righteousness, life, sonship of God, were not human, and consequently not ours, if they were not the object and the product of a human choice and self-determination on His part. God can determine free will and personality only through that which is its own act and activity, only in that which is coequally its own self-determination. The mystery of the harmony of grace and freedom is only a part of the larger one of the metaphysical co-existence and reconciliation of freedom and necessity. But that which is most obscure to reason may be most self-evident to experience, and the fact remains that the highest act of God in us is also the highest activity of ourselves; and that which is nought if not God in us, is equally nought if it is not ourselves in God.

We pass over, then, for another occasion and connection the consideration of a higher personality or a higher sonship in our Lord, to affirm that the immediate question with St. Paul was how humanity in Him became or was made son of God — how He Himself

as man became or was made Son of God. For the process by which man is made divine was first enacted in Him, and He Himself became Son in the way in which we must become sons of God. And this brings us back to St. Paul's account of what I must believe is the genesis or rationale of our Lord's, and our human sonship to God.

Jesus Christ was born of the seed of David according to the flesh. He had a human derivation which identified Him with humanity from David, from Abraham, from Adam. *According to the flesh* means according to the common natural humanity into which we are all born and to which we are all limited by nature. What the Apostle is going to contrast with this in the words *according to the spirit* is what humanity was made or became in Him — that is, Son of God. All through St. Paul, to be in the flesh means to be in ourselves, what *we* are; to be in the spirit is to be in Christ, what *He* is. To be in the spirit is to say with the Apostle himself, I live no longer, Christ lives in me. The question of the Gospel is how with our Lord so to die to ourselves as to live to God. And the way in which we are by that new birth of death and resurrection to attain to the new life of divine sonship and the divine nature is the way by which He did it. That Way of Truth and Life is the Gospel, and the mode or process of it is expressed for us in the passage before us in divinely exact terms.

The principle especially to be emphasized in the discussion before us is this: that Jesus Christ Himself,

or the work wrought by Him in humanity, which is the matter of the Gospel, may with equal truth and propriety be expressed in terms of God and in terms of man. We may regard Him as God saving or as man saved. We may describe what took place in Him not only as what God has done for us, but as God Himself doing for or in us; and on the other hand we may describe it as humanity, in Him as man, doing for itself in God, becoming or being made, by its own faith in God's grace in it, Son of God. Now I contend that the Apostle is here describing our Lord's sonship in terms of that humanity which in Him, and by His act in it, became, was made, and made itself, Son of God. The question of how man, any man, becomes son of God is answered in the person of the universal man, the Son of man. As St. John describes it, the power as well as right, the grace or gift to us, to become sons of God comes to us through One who not only as God brought it down from heaven, but as man earned and exhibited it here on earth. The faith by which we share it with Him is not only ours in Him but His in us — the perfect faith through which by a perfect grace He Himself as man was born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And so the Epistle to the Hebrews describes Him as the great Saint of saints, the Captain and Perfecter of the faith which sanctifies, which as it imparts to us the divine nature makes us all the sons of God. The *how* of this human sonship, first realized and revealed in Him who, by His death and resurrec-

tion, was the first-born from the dead, was the point in St. Paul's mind. The fact that in Jesus Christ, the author and source of it, we must see not only man begotten but God begetting, is another point which elsewhere and otherwise is fully recognized by the Apostle, but it is this thought which he proceeds to develop here.

As we were from the beginning predetermined to sonship through Jesus Christ unto God, so are we in the actual process in time determined — in the technical sense of the English word, but the primary and natural sense of the Greek (see margin of the Revised Version). It is true that Jesus Christ was by His resurrection from the dead proved or declared to be, designated, instated or installed, Son of God. But even if any one of these were the immediate meaning here, we must fall back upon the sense that He was revealed to be only so much as He became through the resurrection. The resurrection in itself in no wise proved or declared Him Son of God in the metaphysical sense. All that was actually expressed in it, as such, was this — humanity, by act of God in it, raised out of sin and death into the holiness and life of God, become Son of God and partaker of the divine nature by death to itself and a new life in God. What is imparted to the definition by the particular word *determined* — "determined Son of God in power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" — is as follows: In reality, it is only a logical distinction which has no counterpart in fact

which we make between what God predetermined in thought and determines in act or process. The truth is, that our life — above all, our more immediately divine life, our life in Christ — whether viewed by us as predetermined in eternity or determined in time, is not of nature or of ourselves but of God. It is an act of God in us, manifested as, and existing only as, an act of ourselves in God. It is an act equally of divine determination, a life of God in us, and of our own self-determination, a life of ourselves in God. In this divine-human life it is not part God and part we, but all God and all we, — just as Jesus Christ Himself is not God in some acts and man in others, but equally God and equally man in every act of His human life. But the special point to be observed here, as the remainder of the definition will plainly show, is that the sonship which is the Gospel is precisely to be defined in Jesus Himself as it is to be defined in us. He is in Himself first everything which we are to be in Him, and in the perfect way in which we are to be it in Him. His life, which is ours, is what it is not by mere fact of nature, whether human or divine. Neither was it by His own act in the nature; for the human nature in which He acted had its limitations for Him, and to have imported into it the freedom from limitation of the divine nature would have been to contradict and nullify it. His life, as truly as ours and only far more perfectly, was a life not of nature nor of Himself but of God; a life as of perfect faith in God, so of perfect grace from God. He knew better

than any of us to say: All that is mine is not mine, but His that sent me. I can of myself do nothing. My father worketh and I work. I and my Father are one.

When St. Paul goes on to say of Jesus Christ that He was determined Son of God *in power*, according to the spirit, etc. — very much depends upon the nature of that power. We must remember that just exactly that which we have not by nature or in ourselves, and the gift or addition of which to us by grace is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is the power to become sons of God. The whole inability and failure of the Law to save us turns upon our own want of power to be or do what it bids us — not as claim on its part but as privilege and blessing on ours. The whole Old Testament dispensation came to an end for want of power truly to make us children of God. The last and greatest of the prophets confessed his impotency to baptize with the power necessary to impart the new birth and the new life of the children of God. We shall see in the next chapter that the definition of the Gospel from the standpoint of its operation in us is that It is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes. It makes no difference whether we connect *in power* with *determined* or with *Son of God*. God determines us to sonship by the spirit of holiness which He imparts, by the enabling and victorious power of His Spirit manifested in our spirit, in our power to be holy. And equally we are sons of God by power and fact of that holiness in us, which is participation in the divine

nature and so the very essence and matter of divine sonship. As the power of God manifested in our Lord's own resurrection was not an external divine operation upon Him, but a divine operation within Him, manifesting itself in His own power to overcome sin and death and to arise out of the universal condition of humanity before Him into participation in the spirit and life of God, so is the very *res* of the Gospel for us the divine gift in Him of participation in that self-same resurrection and ascension.

The development or determination of sonship in Jesus Christ, through the divine power in Him, is next defined as not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. It is not a natural but a spiritual sonship. We are not born in it from below, but re-born in it from above. This does not militate against the other sense in which we *are* sons of God by nature. If there were not the basis of a natural relationship and affinity with God, there would be no place or possibility for the actual spiritual relationship with Him into which we are called to enter. The very fact of our predestination from the beginning to sonship means that our nature is constituted for sonship. God has made us for Himself and we shall find no rest until we rest in Him. But neither in the Christianity of the New Testament nor in the facts of the Christian life can I find any more meaning in the so-called natural sonship of man than this, that man is constituted by his nature — not son of God, but — *to become* son of God. That is, it is his nature to enter, beyond his nature, and

outside of himself, into an objective, transcendental, personal or spiritual relationship with God, of which will be born his sonship. All of son that there is in *him* consists in his capacity to become son; the actual sonship is not of himself but of the Father in him. If it is to be hoped that there is in all of us, no matter how inchoately, some sense and motion of the divine fatherhood and our own sonship, it is, I believe, because there is in us all some stirrings of actual interaction over and above the merely potential interrelation between God and us. But, however that may be, the thing spoken of here is a sonship of man to God, first realized and brought to perfection in Jesus Christ, who thus becomes to us the Spiritual Man, Man in perfect personal relation to the personal God, Son of God, in whom all divine Fatherhood is fulfilled and expressed in the coequal correlative of a universal Sonship.

The addition in the definition of the next term is most exactly pertinent and significant. We are, or our Lord was, determined Son of God in power, according to the spirit *of holiness.* The spirit of man, the God-related part in him, — as the flesh is the nature-related and self-related part, — needs to be designated not only by itself but by its function. And the function of the spirit is holiness; it is that in us in and through which we may be partakers of the divine spirit and the divine nature. If not etymologically, yet actually and practically in its New Testament use, holiness means a personal participation in the personal Spirit, in the spiritual disposition, character, and nature of God.

We define what holiness is by defining what God is. If, says St. John, we are born of God and are sons of God, then we have the Spirit of God and are of the spirit that God Himself is of. And if God is Love, then is holiness, which is the spirit and nature of God in us, love also. The Greek *virtue* is an ideal, rather æsthetic than ethical, of highest and most beautiful *manhood*. The Hebrew *righteousness* carries with it primarily the conception of conformity to an outward law, with them the highest and most universal law, the law of God. The *holiness* of Christianity is an inward spirit, the Spirit of God, the divine nature. St. Paul, who is the opposite of legal, the great opponent of legalism, has made the legal thing righteousness rather than the evangelical thing holiness the theme of his exposition of Christianity. But his characteristic contention that righteousness is not by nature nor by law, but of God by His Spirit, is practically an argument to prove that there is no true righteousness, as indeed no highest manhood, but in holiness, — that is to say, in participation in the life of God.

It is the last word of St. Paul's definition of the Gospel of God in the person of Jesus Christ which gives the most distinctive touch to his own conception and exposition of it. The sonship realized by and in Christ was realized through His death and resurrection. The truth involved in that fact is this: that all actual spiritual sonship to God, all holiness, all divine spirit and life in us, is not only a regeneration but a resurrection. Not only does it come not from nature nor from our-

selves but from God — but it requires an act on our part of renunciation of nature and of ourselves, a free, personal, and spiritual death to nature and ourselves and a new given and risen life of God, received and made our own by faith. This will be so constantly with us as we follow the Apostle through his thought of the Gospel that we need pursue it no further here. The point with which I close at present is this: The Gospel as distinctively such is not alone what our Lord was in His pre-existent eternity; it is not an individual and solitary act performed for, apart from, and instead of, ourselves. It is best understood and best interpreted as the consummate act in which — God in man and man in God — each perfectly fulfilled himself in the other, God becoming actively the holiness, righteousness, and life of man, and man, passively as from God but actively in all else, becoming the holiness, righteousness, and life of God; as St. Paul says, That we might become the righteousness of God in Him (Christ). It is out of death and resurrection that humanity in Christ was, as in itself it must be, determined Son of God in power, according to the spirit of holiness.

IV

THE FURTHER DEFINITION OF THE GOSPEL

I am not ashamed of the Gospel: for it is the power of God to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God by faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith. — ROMANS I. 16, 17.

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. — ROMANS X. 9, 10.

IV

THE FURTHER DEFINITION OF THE GOSPEL

After one of the most perfect of those personal approaches by which the Apostle always comes in the most natural way to the subject of his epistles, St. Paul in Rom. i. 16, 17, states with scientific definiteness and clearness the theme not only of this special epistle but of his entire exposition of the Gospel. This he does in a second definition, at bottom identical with the first but differing from it in this, that whereas the former viewed the Gospel as, to us, objectively completed and existing in the individual person of our Lord, the present one defines it as subjectively in process in us. The Gospel, he says, is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith to faith. We have here an exact statement of all the principal "causes" which both determine and define the thing under consideration. The final cause or end of the Gospel is human salvation. Its efficient or determining cause is the Spirit or grace or power of God operating in us. The apprehending or receptive cause on our part is faith. The material cause, or matter, of salva-

tion, and so of the Gospel, is righteousness,—which again is from God, through faith.

We have, perhaps, in the previous chapter, sufficiently dwelt upon the Gospel as a *power*, and we shall have occasion to elucidate yet further that aspect of it. The words specially contributed by the present definition to our understanding of the matter are just those which most belong to it on its human side,—*salvation* and *faith*. The end or work of the Gospel is the salvation of man; and that salvation consists in a righteousness which he finds or attains not in himself but in God. And he finds and possesses it there through faith in Jesus Christ, who is God his righteousness: the way to salvation is the way of faith; man *believes* unto righteousness. The righteous shall live of or through faith, which apprehends and appropriates to itself the righteousness and life of God as given or made ours in Christ.

But there are some other words of the definition which require a truer understanding. In the first place, the word Gospel itself is too commonly (though often unavoidably) used in a way which brings to us the divine matter of it at second or even third hand instead of at first. The Gospel is not our preaching of Christ's teaching of God's message to us of love and life. The very *differentia* of the Gospel from any other good news or information is that this is a communication from God, and is a direct and immediate utterance of the Divine Word Himself. In the Gospel God is the Speaker, and His Word is not as the words

of men — the mere symbol or inadequate expression of the thing they mean; rather is it the Thing Itself He means. Jesus Christ Himself is God's Word, and He is no mere proclamation to us of a divine righteousness or life; rather is He Himself the Divine Righteousness and the Divine Life which not only in Him but as Himself God proclaims to the world as its supreme glad tidings. The true Gospel, then, is not something of ours about God or Christ, it is God in Christ our salvation, because our holiness, our righteousness, our eternal life.

When therefore it is said in our definition that in the Gospel there *is revealed a righteousness of God*, I take it in its highest sense and interpretation to mean that in Jesus Christ Himself, as God's Word and Gospel, God reveals Himself as our righteousness and our life. But in the divine-human righteousness which is Himself, Jesus Christ is not only God's but our righteousness, not only God in us but we in God. And if our righteousness, as human, is necessarily of faith, so His righteousness, on its human side, must have been of faith. And so it was; the resurrection of Jesus Christ was the perfect victory of the spirit over the flesh, of faith over sense and the world. It is in that sense that He was the author and finisher of our faith, and so of the righteousness and the life which come to us from God through faith.

We may return now to a consideration of the proper function or activity of faith in the operation of our salvation. And in the study of this we shall be able

to illustrate more practically the meaning and truth of the Gospel as a power of God. Perhaps no passage will better serve our purpose than that in the Epistle to the Ephesians in which the Apostle prays that the eyes of our heart may be enlightened, that we may know what is the hope of God's calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in heavenly places. The greatness of His power to usward who believe is manifestly a spiritual power, the Spirit of God in our spirit imparting to us the power of God, the power of Jesus Christ, the power of holiness and righteousness and eternal life, the power to overcome sin and to be victorious even over death. And this spiritual power of holiness and life in us, wrought by God's grace through our faith, is identified in kind with the working of the strength of His might which God wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead. That is, the resurrection of Jesus Christ Himself was the realization and manifestation of a new divine power in humanity — in the might of the spirit to transcend the natural possibilities of the flesh and to attain the life and freedom of the children of God. The resurrection of our Lord was therefore, as ours must be, on its human side an act of faith in God, as on the divine side it was an operation of the power of God, or of grace, in humanity.

The saving faith of Christianity is not a vague or general belief in the wisdom, power, and goodness of God. Such a general and undefined implicit confidence and trust in His love and love-purpose concerning us is the proper enough attitude of our finite spirits toward the Father of spirits, but that is not the Gospel. The Gospel was a definite promise and is a well-defined and specific gift of God to man. It comes to us not in human words but in the eternal personal Word of God, who is God Himself in fulfilment of the promise and in communication of the gift to us of Himself.

Our faith should be the exact correlative of God's grace or gift. The faith that saves to the uttermost is a faith which clearly apprehends in Christ Jesus and wholly appropriates to itself the visible power of God actually manifested in human salvation. To the eye of faith the resurrection of Jesus Christ is its own salvation realized and revealed. It is its own proved power in the spirit to overcome and survive the weaknesses and evils of the flesh, to find refuge from the deficiencies and insufficiencies and shortcomings of itself in the all-sufficiency and the self-fulfilment of God. If, says St. Paul, we will confess with our mouth Jesus as Lord, and will with our heart believe that God raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved. If Jesus is indeed Lord of our minds, our hearts, our wills, our lives; if we see in Him all that we ought to, and would, know and love and do and be; and if we apprehend and appropriate to ourselves all the divine presence and power that lifted Him, in order that it

might lift us in Him, out of the sin and death of the world into the holiness and life of God,—then not only shall we be saved in fact, but are we already saved in faith. For faith in the Word of God is a present possession of future things.

The above is the precise thought of St. Peter, who says of our Lord that He was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for our sake, who through Him are believers in God, which raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory; so that our faith and hope might be in God. To be through Him believers in God, that our faith and hope shall be in God, means that we see in Jesus Christ the thing that we are to believe, that we accept in His resurrection our own accomplished and assured salvation from sin and eternal death.

So much for the definite meaning and function of faith in the actual operation in us of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is very true that nothing is said in so many terms of the death and resurrection of our Lord in the definition we are discussing, but it is nevertheless manifest from the whole tenor of St. Paul's teaching that the power of God exercised in human salvation is the power of God revealed in Christ's resurrection, and that the essential truth of that resurrection is humanity's own God-wrought and self-wrought victory over sin and death.

That human salvation is not a natural thing but primarily a moral thing, not a mere fact of man's nature but essentially an act of himself, that it can

come to him only through a process of self-realization and fulfilment, is the result and condition of his constitution as a person. Personality comes only by self-generation; that which is not of the self in the man is not personal or himself. This truth had its abundant recognition in the Old Testament. It is only righteousness, it was said, that saves or exalts either a man or a nation. And righteousness is distinctively not a physical or mechanical or natural but a moral rightness; a right attitude and habit and character of the will, of the person, of the man. The reason, the will, the conscious, free self-determination and selfhood of the man is the man. Now righteousness is a matter of right relations, and the Old Testament brought the law of it to its highest possible expression when it defined the spirit and letter of it to be — to love God supremely and one's neighbor as one's self. I suggested a possible surprise that St. Paul should have selected for his keyword the Old Testament *righteousness* instead of the New Testament *holiness*, or St. John's *life*. Either of the three indeed carries the other two with it. There is neither participation in the divine nature, nor fulfilment of the divine law, nor part in the divine life, by itself without the others. And Jesus is equally our holiness, our righteousness, and our life. Still the word righteousness carried with it so much the association of mere obedience to law that we might have expected the Apostle who was to expose the insufficiency of mere law, even the divine law, for human salvation, to eschew it for the higher connotations of

spirit and life. And yet, if we look deeper, we may discover, as well in the thing itself as in St. Paul's special mission, a sufficient reason for its selection. We must take very seriously and in earnest our Lord's and St. Paul's strong declarations that the Gospel comes not to supersede but to fulfil and establish the law. Indeed, as has been already said, the Gospel is the Gospel only as it fulfils the law, as it is the power of God in us to be what God's law, which is our own law, constitutes and calls upon us to be. Nothing short of that will be our life or our blessedness, or consequently our salvation.

I spoke in the second chapter of the historical discipline of Judaism under the law as one of the most important presuppositions and preparations of Christianity. That long training, according to St. Paul, was not merely to convince human experience of the weakness and unprofitableness of the law as a means of spiritual health and life. By the law indeed was the knowledge of sin, and the awakening and development of the consciousness of sin was the most immediate precondition of the sense of need and the possibility of reception of the grace of holiness. But the end of the law is not alone to reveal its own impotence and inefficiency. It is indeed in the end insufficient and unable to produce the righteousness it requires and demands of us; but what but for the law should we know of righteousness at all? The law is the creation and expression to us of righteousness. It is in the deepest and highest sense itself righteousness; and Jesus Christ superseded the

law only as He was Himself the righteousness of the law and the law of righteousness, whereas all so-called laws before Him were only imperfect and impotent human symbols or letters of the law. But not only does the law alone primarily give us the conception and knowledge of righteousness; it alone awakens or quickens and develops in us the moral necessity of ourselves becoming and being righteous. The truth that righteousness is moral or personal life, and that sin is death, is not only a revelation of God but a fact of experience. And that experience comes to us only through the experimental tutelage of the law. It is only when the law has first taught effectually the lesson that the ultimate necessity of personal life is righteousness or the fulfilment of itself, that the law of a being is but the expression of that being's perfection and blessedness — it is only then that the law can impart the further truth of experience, that it is in itself insufficient to produce in us the righteousness it prescribes and requires of us. The fatal misconception that the Gospel is something done for us or instead of us, and not something to be done in us and by us; or again, that it is something to be done only in us and not by us, is an error so great as practically to contradict the nature and neutralize the effects of Christianity. On the contrary, the Gospel is the power of God to be ourselves, and Jesus Christ has it in Him to help us only as He can enable us to be ourselves what He is, and to do for ourselves what He did. If we do not know in ourselves the power of His resurrection, or

the power of His divine righteousness, we do not know Him. It is as true that nothing is personally ours that is not of ourselves, as it is that nothing of holiness, righteousness, or life can be of ourselves, or ours, that is not of God. Blessedness is above all else an energy or activity of our own souls, however true it is also that it is an energy or activity of God in our souls. We conclude, therefore, that the Gospel is as much still our own obedience to the law, as it is, over and above that, the grace or power of God to attain that obedience.

We can see from the above, I think, why it is that St. Paul retained the term righteousness as the Christian expression of that spiritual state, attitude, or activity, the attainment of which is salvation, because the possession of it is life and blessedness.

V

THE WRATH OF GOD AGAINST SIN

The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness. — ROMANS I. 18.

Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practise the same things. — ROMANS II. 1.

What if some were without faith? shall their want of faith make the faithfulness of God of none effect? God forbid: yea, let God be found true but every man a liar. — ROMANS III. 3.

V

THE WRATH OF GOD AGAINST SIN

PERHAPS we should have said that the most complete and proper presupposition of the Gospel was the fact, and the universal fact, of sin. And yet, I do not believe that the coming, or the primary end and function, of the Gospel was conditioned upon the fact of sin. The Gospel of the Incarnation means the completion as well as the redemption or restoration of humanity. I for one, speculatively and not dogmatically, cannot see how there could have been a personal evolution or completion, a production and development of holiness, righteousness, and spiritual life, without what we call the fall, without an experimental coming to the knowledge of good and evil, of sin and holiness, of life and death. I cannot see how there could have been generated in us the sense of holiness except in reaction against a sense of sin, or a fact of holiness except in conflict with and victory over an actuality of sin. But if humanity could have attained spiritual completion without sin, and therefore without redemption or restoration, I hold that the Gospel of Jesus Christ would have been as necessary for that as in fact it was for that and the other also. Man is essen-

tially incomplete without God, and the relation to God which he needs for his completion is not an immanental unity and oneness with God by nature, but a transcendental personal union and fellowship with God by grace and faith, — that is, by the mutual spiritual intercommunion and intercommunication of love and service, which is the life of God, and of all in the universe who share the personal or spiritual life of God. Jesus Christ is human completion in that He is, not the natural unity, whatever it be, of God and man, which is true of all men, but the personal union and fellowship of God and men, which is perfectly true only in Him as at once God and man, and is true in us just in the measure of our knowledge and participation of it in Him.

Sin, however, is in the world, and is universal, and there is no deliverance from it and its consequences except in a divine salvation. And the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not only the divine proclamation but the divine manifestation and fact of that salvation. Whatever may be thought of St. Paul's, either traditional or speculative, account of the origin or natural history of sin, we need only to remember that all that is material to his truth of the Gospel is — not his theories but his facts. Those facts are, that sin exists; that sin is universal, a race as well as an individual fact, inseparable from *the flesh* in itself; that nevertheless sin is not the true nature or law of humanity; that it is its death and not its life, which is holiness; that humanity can be or become itself only through a redemption or

salvation from sin and the death which is its consequence; that the natural condition of humanity on its spiritual side is a sense, which grows with the growth of the spiritual consciousness, of want or need, which is in itself a prophecy and promise of the divine supply which we call grace, by which we mean the personal knowledge and fellowship of God Himself. These as far as they go are the materials on the human side of which the Apostle constructs his conception of the Gospel. To complete the picture, in anticipation, we might add that the materials on the other side are, the eternal love-nature and love-purpose of God; the predestination in nature itself, as well as in the mind of God, of the whole creation in man its highest part to that personal participation in the divine spirit, nature, and life, which constitutes him son of God; the realization and revelation of that relation in the individual person of Jesus Christ; the provision for such a real and vital fellowship with Christ and participation with Him in the divine power of His life as to make us actually in Him partakers of the divine nature, and sons of God.

I have given the above preliminary outline of the whole Gospel according to St. Paul only, for the present, to show the place of sin in it. All evil, as Kant says in substance, is primarily spiritual and moral. Extract the sting of sin, as St. Paul teaches, and death itself is converted from a supreme evil into mere transition or birth into the supreme good. Deliverance from the evil of sin is to convert all other curse of the world into

blessing. But the only possible exemption or redemption for a personal spirit from sin is through its own conquest of sin. The conquest cannot be made for it, but only by it; because in its own conquest alone is its holiness, its righteousness, its life. The victory of any other can be for it, only as it is capable of being made, and will be made, its own self-undertaken and self-accomplished victory. The power of God to save us actually saves us only as it is made our power to save ourselves.

To revert to St. Paul's account of sin, The wrath of God, he says, is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. In what way is that wrath revealed? There is no better illustration than here of St. Paul's mental habit of seeing God's attitudes or acts only in the facts of nature or of human experience, that is to say, in the working of things. If, as Bishop Butler says, all experience of life shows what part God takes in it, on what side He is, viz.: on the side of righteousness and *against* unrighteousness; if the agnosticism even of Matthew Arnold can see clearly enough that the power not ourselves in the affairs of men makes for righteousness only and wholly, it was not too much for the more spiritual vision of St. Paul to discern that to say that the Righteous Lord loveth righteousness can mean no more nor less than that He hates unrighteousness. And indeed no terms can express too strongly the wrath of God actually revealed in nature and in human affairs against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men as it exists in

the world. St. Paul expresses himself neither otherwise than as the actual facts revealed nor more strongly than the actual facts justified. Those facts were no doubt at their darkest when the true Light dawned in the person of our Lord, and St. Paul saw and described them in all their contrast with it. Nevertheless the facts of the world are practically the same always, and the contrasts are sufficient still to mutually exhibit each other.

The material points in the Apostle's treatment of sin we may briefly consider. The first is a very essential one in his view of the Gospel. It might be expressed as his sense of the relation between ungodliness and unrighteousness. It is identical with the question still with us of the mutual dependence or independence of morality and religion. No one denies the possibility or actuality of a, relatively, high morality in a non-religious individual person. That is not at all the question. When a social morality exists, whatever or however essential may be the causes or conditions of its existence, it may nevertheless exist in a high degree in those who mentally deny or contradict those conditions. The true question is, what would be the morality or moral condition, the righteousness, of the world if there were no such thing as godliness, if man were not really a spiritual and religious being, and were not often, in his better types, actually more religious than is consistent with his own theory, or than he knows or thinks himself to be. At any rate it was St. Paul's conviction that man is a spiritual and religious being,

in the sense of being constituted and having a capacity and a need for spirituality and religion. His highest and true righteousness is not a mere experimental matter of right relations with things and persons other than himself, rather is it a vastly deeper personal harmony with the spirit and law and, what these include and imply, the Personality and personal meaning and purpose of the universe. Of course that conviction is at the very root of the Apostle's central truth — that righteousness is not a mere law, nor even a mere abstract, impersonal, spirit, but the Personal Spirit of the living God in us and become our spirit too, God Himself our as well as His own righteousness. I have often thought that in the Prayer Book there is significance and point in the very mode of printing the emphatic words in the Epistle for the Sunday before Advent, as though it were an inscription upon the very portal of the Church, or the Church Year: This is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

It is not merely that St. Paul connects the two words together, godliness and righteousness, as though they belonged so — spirit and body of one and the same thing — but he explicitly states and explains the fact of their genetic connection. Moral corruption is the consequence of which spiritual perversion is the cause. *Wherefore*, he says, God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness. And he repeats, *For this cause* God gave them up unto vile passions. For what cause? For this: Even as, or because, they saw

not fit to have God in their mind, God gave them up to an unfit or reprobate mind. Like every other part of his nature, the spiritual or God-related nature of man is liable not only to non-use but to mis-use. And on the principle that the corruption of the best is always the worst, the perversion of the spiritual or religious affections and passions has been responsible for a very large part of the evil and confusion of the world. Superstition and idolatry, fanaticism and spiritual pride and intolerance, have always been recognized by religion itself as quite as possible and actual in the world, and often even more positively pernicious and injurious and hateful, as a mere negative unbelief or disbelief of the facts of the spirit. Much of the immorality which St. Paul so graphically describes was actually associated with so-called religious worship. So that the Apostle assigns as the cause of the universal condition of moral corruption in the world the universal prevalence not so much of no religion as of false religion. We must remember, however, that the natural and proper remedy for false religion, for the untold damage that has been done in the name of religion, the immeasurable harm and hindrance that so-called religion has been in the progress of human affairs, is not to be found in an impossible abolition of religion, but in the bringing it, as it devolves upon us to bring everything else in our lives, to its true meaning and function. The bodily passions, the selfish impulses, of our nature have wrought and still work evil enough surely in the world, but who dreams of abolishing them — and not rather

of reducing and subordinating them to the reason and end of their existence in us? In the knowledge of God stands, and will forever stand, our eternal lives. Only in knowing Him can we know ourselves, and only in the right knowledge of Him, which is not a mere conceptual or representative but an experimental and real knowledge, can we have that right knowledge and possession and direction of ourselves which is the first condition of rightness or righteousness in our lives.

It is important, too, to observe in detail *how* the wrath as well as the approval and favor of God manifests itself in the actual working of things. What religion recognizes as the divine sanctions are all attached as natural consequences. The blessing or the curse of the thing is always sooner or later, but inevitably and invariably, in the thing itself; and it lies in the nature of the thing to breed or multiply itself and so to be forever accumulating, organizing, and consolidating, and so fixing and determining, within itself its own inherent blessedness or accursedness. Nor can there be any possible exception or objection to this natural working of things. For how is it possible that the divine holiness, righteousness, and life should be in itself and in all its consequences a perfection and blessedness to us, and that the opposite and contradiction of all these should not be a corresponding imperfection and curse? What can God's love and approval of holiness revealed in its inherent blessedness be but His hatred and condemnation of

sin revealed from heaven in the awful logic of its visible consequences in the world?

We are studying the Gospel in its meaning for ourselves, and it is unnecessary for our purpose here to go into the details of the profound and overwhelming exposure by which, himself a Jew, St. Paul turns the tables against the Jews, and proves that for all their horror of the corruption of the Gentile world they themselves, in their self-righteousness, were no better. The Jews had had, as the peculiar people of God, greater advantages and opportunities — advantages that were very substantial and real, and that had been to the true spiritual children of Abraham, the Israelites indeed, divine preparations and helps. But what use had they made of their opportunity? They had rested in the objective possession of their privileges, without turning them to the subjective use or account for which they were given. They were Jews outwardly and not inwardly; and their circumcision was outward in the flesh, in the letter, and not that of the heart, in the spirit; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

The outcome of the Apostle's profound reflections upon a whole world lying thus in sin; upon the utter failure of God's own people as a whole to realize the divine promises or bring about the divine fulfilments; upon the universal and disastrous collapse of the Gentiles, under natural as of the Jews under the revealed law, in the effort to manifest the righteousness which was their own as well as God's and nature's law; — I say that the conclusion of St. Paul's thought

upon this depressing picture is one which we might well take to heart still, and with which reassure ourselves and revive our drooping faith and hope. Is the righteousness of God dead in the world? No indeed! Let every man be a liar, and God is still true. What if few, or even none, have faith? Shall the faithlessness of man defeat the faithfulness of God? Shall the absence of human faith disprove or dissolve the divine objects of faith? No, God's promises and gifts are there still, and will be there forever, to be accepted or rejected for salvation or condemnation, for life or death. But more than that, the Apostle's words imply, if they do not directly state, not only that the good faith or faithfulness of God shall not be defeated by the faithlessness of man, but that faith in God shall not be brought to nought, and that the divine righteousness and life shall prevail over the unbelief and indifference of men.

VI

THE NEW RIGHTEOUSNESS

They are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.

Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin.

But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace. — ROMANS III. 10, 19–24.

VI

THE NEW RIGHTEOUSNESS

The conclusion of the previous chapter brought us up to the point in St. Paul's argument where the reason and meaning of the Gospel most clearly appear. The truth and need of righteousness, the recognition of the claims of righteousness, the existence of a law of righteousness, whether speaking in the hearts and consciences of men or thundered from heaven upon Sinai, all these somehow do not avail to make righteous or to produce an actual righteousness in the world. For, as a matter of fact, righteousness does not exist. Where it professes to exist, it is at best only a conceit of righteousness, a self-righteousness, which is the most fatal and hopeless form of unrighteousness. Where the real meaning and truth of righteousness has been best conceived, and regard for the external divine law of it has produced its best fruit in life and character, what has that fruit been? Not by any means a consciousness of the possession or the conviction of a possible self-attainment of righteousness, but on the contrary, just in proportion to the high valuation and real love of the law, the consciousness of not only shortcoming but transgression, and the sense not only

of sin but of impotence. Had not the Lord Himself when on earth felt that the one hopeless symptom or condition of a man was the conceit of his own righteousness? Was He not driven to the conclusion that it were better for a man to be the worst sinner and know it — than to be a so-called righteous man and unconscious of the sin that was in him? There is an absolute identity in the point of view of Jesus and of St. Paul on this point. The science or knowledge of the principles and rules of morality is not morality. The only real righteousness is the spirit and the life of Him whose law righteousness is. And the more profoundly we know and feel what His righteousness is, the more we know and feel that we need Him as the spirit and power and life of it. This, then, is St. Paul's absolutely exact induction or generalization from the spiritual facts of the world as he saw it, and as it is still: There is none righteous, no not one. By the law is only the knowledge, the sense, of sin. That only can the law do for us; and yet in doing only that, how much more has it in reality accomplished! For the very sense of sin which the law gives is itself the promise and condition of the Gospel. God takes away from us our righteousness only to give us His own, Himself. The law does not exist merely to exhibit its own weakness and unprofitableness, and in consequence to be discredited and annulled. It exists rather to create a need, a capacity, a hunger and thirst for holiness, righteousness, life — so deep, so high, so great, that only God Himself can fill and satisfy it. Truly,

as St. Paul says, The Law was and is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

From works of law shall no flesh be justified in God's sight; for through law comes knowledge of sin. It is not said here that through law there comes not actual righteousness, but that through law no man is before God recognized as being righteous. No man who knows what righteousness is will come into God's presence with a claim of his own to it. And if he does, so far from the claim being recognized, it will be regarded as the one disqualification for the reality to which it pretends. The Gospel of Jesus Christ was for sinners of every type save the impossible one of self-righteousness. This sense of being received, accepted, regarded, treated, as righteous is carried on from the mere negative statement under consideration to a positive form of it which gives a new and important step in St. Paul's Gospel. Not only will the most righteous man who comes before God with the claim of his own righteousness not be allowed as such, but the chief of sinners who comes to God with a true sense of his own unrighteousness and a sincere faith in God's righteousness made his own in Jesus Christ *will be* received, accepted, regarded, and treated, as being righteous. It is this being *treated as*, not on the ground of being righteous, but on the ground of a certain relation of faith to Christ's righteousness, upon which is laid the chief emphasis in St. Paul's system. It is impossible to attach too much importance to this turn of thought, and we shall be largely occupied with it as

we go on. But in order to do justice to it we must understand it, and in order to do that we must question it.

The Pharisee who went up into the temple to pray and reminded God of his own righteousness was not thereby justified; while the publican who afar off was conscious only of his own sin in the sight of God was, we are told, justified. That cannot mean either that he was recognized as actually being sinless, or that he was by act of God at the time made sinless or righteous. The term "justify" is not in the parable of the Gospel used in the developed, almost technical, sense of the epistle before us, but it is exactly on the line of it, and it illustrates the progress and the propriety of its later use. If the publican, rightly and truly knowing himself to be a sinner, or a transgressor of the law of righteousness, could be justified — which meant could be regarded or accepted as righteous — it must of course be, not on the ground of his actually being so in life and character, but on the ground of his, at the time, occupying the right posture or attitude, the only right attitude possible for him, towards righteousness and at the same time towards his own conscious unrighteousness. What was that attitude? There is only one which it could possibly be, and every sinner who in his sin is in any sense or degree justified before God, can be so only on the ground of that one attitude. It is the attitude which negatively towards our own unrighteousness we call *repentance*, and positively towards the righteousness of God we call *faith*. If a

man did not have some sense of the righteousness which he violates, he could have no sense of the unrighteousness which is his violation of it. The condition of possible or future righteousness is the right attitude or intention of mind and feeling towards actual present unrighteousness. It is possible in any sense to justify or accept as right only that personal attitude towards the matter which at the time is the nearest right possible for the person. In the initial moment of contrition the only possible and the necessarily first right posture of the sinner is that consciousness of himself which could not be the beginning of hatred of his sin if it were not to the same extent the beginning of a love of holiness. Where this exists in truth and sincerity, even though it be but the beginning of what is an infinite process, it is possible and right to accept and treat already as right that which as yet is only a first turning to and direction towards the right. St. John expresses more fully this divine propriety of justifying and accepting the simple sense of sin as the beginning of holiness, when he says: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us; if we confess our sin, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

We see already in our Lord's parable of the treatment of the publican the precise and entire principle which in St. Paul we find developed into the doctrine of justification by faith. At its fullest and completest that doctrine means this: that the veriest sinner who

begins to see and feel his sin in himself, by repentance, and his holiness or righteousness in Christ, by faith, is as truly on the way and as near to the end of righteousness as is then possible for him, and it is divinely right that his faith should be received and treated as being righteousness, because it is not only the actual beginning of righteousness in him but is the righteousness proper for him at that stage. Righteousness in us cannot begin otherwise than as an incipient sense of sin and that *prolepsis* or pre-vision and apprehension of holiness which we call faith. Faith is therefore with a divine truth and propriety reckoned or imputed to us as being righteousness, for it is a necessary moment or stage in our righteousness.

The above view is supplemented and completed by the fact that God has first promised and now given us in Jesus Christ the holiness or righteousness which is the end and meaning of all repentance and faith. So sure are His promises and so certain His gifts, that there is no excuse for faith's not accepting them as already in possession; and that which faith already appropriates as its own, God's grace goes beyond our faith in imputing to us as already our own. Such, in so brief a preliminary sketch, is the new righteousness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It differs from the old in that, while the righteousness of the law consists in our own obedience, and is thus a self-righteousness, and under the law righteousness on our part is the condition of our acceptance with God; the righteousness of faith, on the other hand, begins with only our

sense of sin and experience of weakness or insufficiency, God's loving and free acceptance of which in us is the condition and starting-point and earnest of a righteousness of our own: which righteousness, then, is further and fully assured to us by the actual revelation of it to us in Jesus Christ, in whom we see all the presence and power of God in us, and in consequence all the power in ourselves in God, necessary to its actual attainment and possession.

It is true, then, that St. Paul's justification by faith is not primarily and immediately a righteousing or making us righteous, but an acceptance of our own sense of unrighteousness and our faith in God's righteousness as being our own; but nevertheless there is a vital and necessary connection between the two things which has to be taken into the fullest account. The Apostle says that by works of law shall no flesh be justified before God. Why is it that no man shall be accepted or accounted as righteous through the operation of the law? Is it not solely because the law, merely as such, that is, merely through the man's knowledge or obedience of the law, is incapable of making the man righteous or of operating or producing righteousness? Is not the point after all the fact that the end of the whole matter, which is man's salvation, which again is the effectuating or actualizing of his potential righteousness and personal life, is not to be accomplished through any command on God's part or any obligation on his own to be righteous, but only through the grace and power of God in him to make

him, by enabling him to make himself, righteous? As the law is not the end but only a means, and a means which, effectual as far as it goes in bringing us towards the end, is ineffectual to bring us to the end, — so the Gospel itself, too, however effectual to the end, is only a means, and as such must be interpreted not in itself but by its end. And what is the end of the Gospel? It is not that men in order to be righteous in the end shall be provisionally accepted and treated as such in the beginning; but exactly the reverse, that they shall be so lovingly and graciously taken into God's righteousness and treated as righteous in the beginning that they shall become, or be made so, in the end. It is the end always that determines the meaning and nature of the thing, and the Gospel is the power of God unto an actual righteousness of men; and only by the way, or in a secondary sense, a gracious treating of sinful men as not sinful, and of a faith which is not yet righteousness as being already such.

The point I am insisting upon may be more plainly put in the following way: It is true that the meaning of the words in the passage before us is that no man is accepted or accounted as righteous through operation of the law; and then that a man is accepted as righteous, or accounted righteous, upon faith in Christ, and apart from any claim of righteousness of his own. But why is he not accepted as righteous through the law, and why is he accepted as such through faith? The answer to the first is, that he is not justified or accepted as righteous through the law, not only because as a matter

of fact he is not so righteous, but because he cannot be; the law has not for him any promise or power of righteousness. Its insistence or enforcement so far from imparting holiness only plunges him more and more deeply into sin. Is not the answer to the second question then this: that a man is accepted as righteous through faith in Christ, because Christ *is* his righteousness, and because faith in Christ has in it the potency and the promise of his own actual righteousness in and through Jesus Christ? The law cannot justify a man or pronounce him righteous, because it cannot make him so. The Gospel or faith in Jesus Christ as our righteousness can justify us, because it is based not only upon the only condition in ourselves of becoming righteous — viz.: knowledge of our own unrighteousness and faith in God's righteousness — but upon the only power without ourselves to make us righteous — viz.: the love and grace and fellowship of God; and all that manifestly expressed and communicated to us in the person of Jesus Christ.

The importance, and even necessity, of insisting upon this last point is that Christianity is constantly in danger of becoming a mere blind trust in the general and indiscriminate goodness of God, apart from or even in spite of what we are or do ourselves. We look for our salvation in God or in Jesus Christ and not in ourselves, as though there were any salvation possible for us apart from or other than what we ourselves are and do. We find a weak and selfish satisfaction and comfort in what God is to us, without knowledge or

thought that the only real satisfaction or comfort that we can ever know will be through what God is in us and we are in Him. Of all the good things that it is more blessed to give than to receive, that we can continue to receive only through giving, the chiefest is the supreme good of God Himself. The Spirit of God, the holiness, righteousness, or life of God can do us no good save as they are our own, and they are our own only in our own possession and exercise of them. It is an infinite initial blessing, a present Gospel, to us that God does not wait for us to be good, that He takes us to Himself from the moment of the birth in us of the will to be good, and by treating us as though we were makes us good. But let us beware of stopping with the Gospel of being accepted and not going on to the real Gospel of being good. For there is no other real good for man than that of being good, of his own goodness. Any other is only a blessing on the way, a refreshment and a help to the consummate end and blessedness of being what God is. And let us remember, too, what the goodness is that is our only real good. It is the spirit, nature, and life of God, it is love, service, and sacrifice. We have heard it said, I am content to be a sinner saved by grace. In the first place, in its truest and highest sense, to be a sinner saved is to be one who having been a sinner is so no longer; to be content to be saved in and not from sin, to be saved and still a sinner, is no true contentment. To be content to have been a sinner and to be saved by grace, or by God, only, is the highest contentment

of which we are capable. It is St. Augustine's bride content to be adorned only with the gifts of her divine spouse. But, in a lower sense, we may with truth and right, in the impossibility of an immediate or instantaneous attainment of the divine perfection, and even with the consciousness of a still inhering defilement of sin, be content to abide sinners still, waiting, without the undue impatience which would be want of faith and an insisting upon sight, for the glory that is to be revealed in us, the glorious liberty and perfection of the sons of God. For one in that stage and attitude of faith and waiting, it is indeed a present though not the whole or highest blessedness of the Gospel that we are already, with God and in faith, all that we shall be in God and in fact. Indeed, in St. Paul's immediate crisis of thought and contention, this stage and phase of the matter is so uppermost for the time that he almost seems to treat it as the whole Gospel. He never really does this, though his ardent and one-sided partisans have abundantly done so ever since. St. Paul has ever in his own mind the whole undismembered conception of salvation in Christ, but he is passionately in earnest in establishing the present gracious status of believers as already and completely in possession in faith, though not yet in fact, of all that God has made ours in Christ. And as the word which the Apostle has deliberately chosen to express the matter of God's gift to us in Christ is righteousness, it is the point of his contention to insist, as the very crux and substance of faith, that we — not shall be, or are becoming, but — *are* righteous

before God. We may come to Him as perfectly accepted and justified as Jesus Christ Himself, and be treated by Him as though we were as complete in Him as is our dead, risen, ascended, and glorified Lord in heaven. Such is the unreserved fulness of divine grace, and the unlimited and unhesitating power and confidence of human faith!

But the very and simple fact that our present justifying and justification are called — not as in English by different words but in Greek by identical ones — righteousing and righteousness, is sufficient evidence that God's calling or treating us as or accounting us righteous means His thereby already potential and in the end actual making us so.

VII

THE OBJECT OF JUSTIFYING OR SAVING FAITH

The righteousness of God (is) through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by His blood. — ROMANS III. 22–25.

VII

THE OBJECT OF JUSTIFYING OR SAVING FAITH

It being established that righteousness is both imputed and imparted only through faith, or in the terms of later theology that faith is the sole mean or instrument of both our justification and our sanctification, it will be well to ascertain clearly from St. Paul's preliminary statement what is the specific object of the faith that justifies and sanctifies. It is here declared progressively to be: First, Jesus Christ Himself. There has been manifested a righteousness of God through faith of Jesus Christ for all who share and exercise that faith. Second, the object of faith is described more explicitly as the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the propitiation or atonement set forth by God for our acceptance through faith. And third, it is the blood of Jesus which is the immediate object of faith. The above benefits are ours through faith in His blood. We will consider these steps of faith in the above order.

In the phrase A righteousness of God through faith of Jesus Christ, it has been questioned whether Jesus Christ is the object of the faith spoken of or the subject of it; whether it is the faith of Jesus Himself or our

faith in Jesus that justifies, sanctifies, and saves us. There is no doubt that the words here mean the latter, that Jesus Christ is here the object and not the subject. But there is a truth in the other view too which I am solicitous of emphasizing for its own sake. Emphatically, the faith that saves us, that works in us, or more exactly through which are worked in us all the wonders of our salvation — our redemption, reconciliation, and resurrection — is the human faith perfected and brought to its victory over the world by our Lord Himself in the consummate fact of His own resurrection, which we must forever contend was not an act of mechanical power exerted upon Him, but an act of spiritual and moral power exerted in Him and by Him, and that humanly. It is then the faith of which Jesus Christ Himself was the supreme subject, the author and finisher or perfecter, that by our sharing it with Him becomes His salvation in us and ours in Him. The faith spoken of here is, it is true, our faith in Jesus Christ; but then our faith in Him is very largely, if not chiefly, our faith in His faith — that is to say, our faith in that supreme and completive act of faith on His part which, as human victory over and redemption from sin and death, is in itself human salvation.

Faith in Jesus Christ then goes on of itself to mean faith in His redemption, or faith in human redemption, our own redemption, wrought in and by Him. When we say The redemption that is in Him, it is again a question whether we mean a redemption that is in Himself or only a redemption that we have in Him.

There is a truth in the first point of view which, on account of its too long and too great obscuration, I wish especially to bring forward in this exposition of St. Paul's teaching. And for this purpose I will bring together several passages in illustration of it. When we were speaking of the Gospel as the power of God unto salvation, I asked where and how that power was manifested, and what it was. When the definition then under discussion went on to say that the Gospel was the power of God unto salvation because therein was revealed a righteousness of God through faith, I asked again, where and how was that righteousness of God revealed. And so here again in the passage now before us, when it is said that there has been manifested a righteousness, not through law, but of God through faith — I ask the same question. Where, and what, and how, has this righteousness of God been manifested? I answer in the first case, that the power of God at work in salvation was revealed in the act and fact of the human salvation actually and visibly wrought first in Jesus Christ Himself. The salvation consisted in the manifest accomplished fact of His perfect holiness and His risen life. That victory of human faith was in itself human salvation. There was the power to save, because there was the salvation it had wrought. There was the divine power in faith to conquer the world, for there was the world conquered by faith. The grace enabling faith and the faith enabled by grace to overcome sin and destroy death, the divine and the human conspiring to produce and

constitute the new righteousness of God in man and man in God, were so met in Jesus that He Himself was the revelation because He was Himself the thing revealed.

In the second case, I answer similarly, or identically, that the righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel is the righteousness revealed in Jesus Christ Himself. For Jesus Christ is Himself the Gospel. All that God, whose Word of Love and Life is all our Gospel, has to say, or reveal, or manifest, or in any way communicate or impart to us, is said and done and stands complete in the human person of His justified and sanctified and glorified Son. The righteousness of Christ is as truly and completely our righteousness as it is God's. It is as truly a righteousness of human faith and obedience, of sin conquered and death suffered and survived, as it is a righteousness of God Himself in it with all His divine power to sanctify and save. The third case is only a repetition of the second except as we recognize a difference between the more general *revelation* of God's righteousness and the more specific *manifestation* of it. While all communications of the divine righteousness are through Jesus Christ, the revelation views it more as extended through than as at first existent only in Him, while the manifestation views it more as existent only in Him than as yet generally imparted through Him. Manifestation is the word generally used to designate God's self-expressions in the individual person of Jesus Christ — as when St. John says, And the Life was manifested, and we

have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, that was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. So here when the Apostle speaks of a righteousness having been manifested, not by nature, nor through law, but from God, he means that it was manifested in the concrete form of our Lord's own human righteousness. It is precisely parallel and identical with St. John's description of sonship in Christ as being born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. How our Lord's own individual human righteousness was, in Himself, not of nature nor of law, but of faith and grace and God, I leave it to our whole exposition to develop.

We come now to apply the foregoing conclusions to the consideration of the question, whether when St. Paul speaks of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus he means a redemption only in us and not in Him, some redemption which we have through Him, and not His own which we share with Him. Whatever other and lower meanings redemption may have on the way, its true meaning is that which it has or will have in the end. It is a redemption to us already simply to know by faith that our redemption is, without a peradventure, provided for us by the redemptive act of Jesus Christ. But that has no meaning at all if it is not a looking forward to and a confident expectation of an actual sharing of a redemption which actually exists, realized and complete, in Jesus Christ. We have only to anticipate the whole teaching of the eighth

chapter of this Epistle to the Romans and remember how is there described the blessed consummation of the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Redemption is a real setting free. Though already free in spirit, through the divine power of faith, or the divine power in faith (or both), we are not yet free in fact as long as we are in the flesh. Even we who have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our bodies. For the Apostle had just before given us assurance that if the Spirit of God and of Christ were really in us, then He who had raised up Christ Jesus from the dead should quicken also our mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in us. There is involved the meaning that our partial redemption which is as yet only in faith shall be complete in fact, when we shall have been freed from the flesh with its still inhering sin and death.

The more general faith in Jesus Christ has then to be specialized and defined into faith in the redemption which is in Him, in Himself as the actual first-fruits of humanity to God, as well as in Him for us who share it with Him. Any one who will now read the description in the Epistle to the Hebrews of how our great high priest and representative *found*, for himself and for us, eternal redemption, will feel, especially in the Greek expression of it, the force of what has been said.

St. Paul adds to this specification of Christ's redemption the further truth that God has set forth, or in a sense put forward, Jesus Christ as—not a mere ex-

pression but, we might say — a real expression (inasmuch as He is the thing expressed as well as the expression of it) of what throughout the New Testament is called propitiation or reconciliation; or later atonement, in the sense of at-one-ment, though later still with much accretion in that term of additional meaning. It is very much questioned whether the Apostle in this passage means to represent God as setting forth Jesus Christ as the true *mercy-seat*, the meeting place or place of reconciliation and at-one-ment between God and man, corresponding to the ancient covering of the ark, upon which was the *shekinah*, the luminous cloud, thought to prefigure the great future truth of the Incarnation; or whether the word means not the propitiatory place but the propitiatory thing, meaning by that the *sacrifice* which propitiates or effects reconciliation and peace between God and man. The more general and probable conclusion is that the expression is left unlimited so as to include all possible truth or points of view. What is necessary for our argument will be brought out in the next matter for our consideration.

The object of saving faith, it will be remembered, was stated to be, not Jesus Christ Himself in general, nor yet only Jesus Christ as place or instrument of our redemption and at-one-ment with God, but these more specifically *through faith in His blood.* The meaning of this tremendous expression is more clearly than anywhere else brought out in the Epistle to the Hebrews — which is thoroughly Pauline in substance

though not in form. And we may recur to the passage alluded to immediately above. Christ, we are told, having come as the true high priest of humanity, not with blood of others but with or through His own blood He entered once for all into the holiest place, having found eternal redemption. What was that blood of His own with which, and only with or by which, He found redemption and entered into eternal oneness with God? The blood was Himself, His human life, without spot or blemish, in the one only perfect offering of love, service, and sacrifice, of completed holiness and righteousness. If the blood of bulls and goats had a certain efficacy of their own, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse our conscience, and our very consciousness, from dead works to serve the living God!

Now what was the main point of comparison or contrast between the blood offered to God in the ancient sacrifices and that offered by our Lord in the one only effectuating sacrifice of Himself? The others, too, were effectual, in their way and to a certain extent. They were not perfectly or really so, because it was impossible for them to be anything more than representative, or substitutionary, or vicarious. Anything *only in another* can never more than represent, it can never be, something in us. The sacrifice which the ancient Jew offered always represented or meant himself, something which he himself ought to be or do. He ought to offer up himself to God, as a whole burnt-

offering of love, service, and sacrifice. He knew that, and acknowledged it by the symbolic act of offering up something else as representative, or substitution, or instead of himself (*vice*). At its best the act contained in it a feeling and confession of his own failure and weakness to do what he ought to do, or to be in himself what he ought to be. If he could not be, he could at least confess his conscious experience of not being and of inability to be. That being at least the first step, and in the direction of, and as far as he could go of himself towards a right relation with God and his own true self, it was right in God to accept it. But how far or to what point could God's acceptance of it go? It could only go to the point of accepting the man's sense of not being and will to be for, or instead of, his being. It was only treating him as being what he was not — and nothing more. It was putting aside, not putting away, either his sin or his weakness. It was covering up or putting out of sight, not removing or putting out of existence, the whole sad fact of his spiritual and moral condition.

Suppose we instance not the burnt-offering but the sin-offering of the Jews. That is still more expressive. We must define a thing only by its highest and final meaning, sometimes by a meaning which it only points to afterwards, and does not itself as yet attain. The Jewish sin-offering could mean only, one or both of, two things. The offerer symbolized by his offering, by the death inflicted upon the substitute for himself, either the death he deserved to die for his sins, or the

death he ought to die from his sins. Or to express it in the more developed language of Christianity, he symbolized either the death of the old man in him, in and for his sins, or the death of the new man, the regenerate, risen man in him, to and from sin. But suppose that the sin-offering did mean all that, and even could mean it all to the man himself, what could it do more than mean it? How could it be it? The other thing's death, however significant of it it might be, could not be what after all and in the end is the thing and the only thing that the man truly wants, the only thing that is or would be his salvation. What would all even God's love and mercy and goodness, and treating him as righteous in his unrighteousness, be to him if after all it was only a fiction, an imputing to him something not his own. And of all things in the world the thing that must most be the man's own is the holiness or righteousness which is his life, his blessedness, himself.

When Jesus Christ made His offering to God, it was the offering of the blood, of the life, not of another but of Himself. By the eternal Spirit that was in Him He offered up Himself, He gave His life, to God in an act of perfect holiness and righteousness, that is to say, in an act of perfect love, service, and sacrifice. It was, because of that, a *whole*-burnt-offering, an offering in which nothing is held back, but the entire self is given and used, spent or consumed, in the divine life of obedience. More than that, it was an effectual sin-offering, an offering in which the self of sin is

crucified, dead, and buried — thenceforth and forever non-existent — and that which takes its place in the person is at once no longer himself and, at the same time, his own inner and truest self, the Christ in him, the son of God that liveth forevermore.

Why, then, could the blood of Jesus, as none other could, take away sin? Because it did take away sin; because it was and is the taking away of sin. Sin was actually abolished in humanity in the person of Jesus Christ, in whom in the most literal and actual sense humanity died to itself and so to sin, and lived to God and so to holiness and righteousness and eternal life. And such is Jesus Christ in Himself, and such is He to us, that He can take us into such an actual participation — in the eternal Spirit, in the divine nature, in the life of God — with Himself, that we too in Him and with Him can share His death and His resurrection.

And so I conclude that the whole work of Jesus Christ was justifying or saving, just because it was not, in any sense, merely representative. It was not merely representative in the sense of being only exemplary, the perfect sample or example of what every human life should be. He was indeed, but He was not *only* the one of us who saw the most clearly and realized the most perfectly the meaning of man and the end of human life. The very perfection of his doing that transcended anything other than or outside of and apart from His sole accomplishment of it. So much so that His perfect righteousness and life are not only an example but the procuring and effectuating cause

of ours: Because I live, ye shall live also. And not only that but more still; He is effectual example and effectuating cause, because He is the very matter or substance, the *res* or thing itself, of our righteousness and our life. As He is God in us our righteousness, so is He the power of God Himself in us manifested in the actuality of our own resurrection and risen life, in the realization of our own spiritual sonship to God and participation in the divine nature.

In a yet higher sense is our Lord's consummate act in humanity not only representative, — and that is, in the sense of its not being, as all sacrifices before Him were, only symbolical or substitutionary or vicarious. They were all accepted only as instead of the offerer, as substitutes for his own act or sacrifice of himself, because that was all they could be. Christ's act, His precious death and glorious resurrection, His holiness, righteousness, and eternal life, can by God's grace and our faith be made, and actually become, not only for us but in us and of us and ours!

VIII

THE CLEARING UP OF THE MYSTERY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

To show His righteousness, because of the passing over of sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the shewing of His righteousness at this present season: that He might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus. Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay; but by a law of faith.

We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. Do we then make the law of none effect through faith? God forbid: Nay, we establish the law. — ROMANS III. 25–28, 31.

VIII

THE CLEARING UP OF THE MYSTERY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

St. Paul in the passage still before us speaks of the manifestation in the person of Jesus Christ of the divine redemption or propitiation as being not, I think, so much a vindication, or even a demonstration, as simply a final elucidation, through fulfilment, of God's eternal purpose of human salvation through Himself becoming our righteousness and our life. He speaks elsewhere of this purpose as God's wisdom, foreordained before the worlds unto our glory, but only now manifested unto all the nations for the obedience of faith. Again he describes it as The mystery which hath been hid from all ages and all generations; but now hath it been manifested to His saints, to whom God was pleased to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is — Christ in us, the hope of glory. And yet again he tells us of God's Purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal, but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

The plan or method of human righteousness was thus not an afterthought or an incidental or accidental expedient, but the predestined, because the only real or effectual, way. Man was designed from the beginning for the freedom and self-activity of the sons of God. But the son and heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a bond-servant, though he be lord of all; but is under guardians and stewards until the term appointed of the father. So we also, when we were children, were kept in bondage under the tutelage and discipline of the law. But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons — that is, through the redemption or accomplished sonship of Jesus Christ — God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So we are no longer servants but sons, and if sons, then heirs. Thus not only is the Gospel older than the worlds, the destiny of man predetermined before even his existence, but in the actual spiritual and moral history of man the Gospel is older than the law. The Gospel, in promise, given to Abraham was not disannulled by the law which four hundred and thirty years after was given through Moses. Let us put that into the language not of figure but of fact.

Truths expressed in the Scriptures in the objective or concrete form of history may be truths independently of the literal truth of the history. It is not

necessary to believe the story of the Garden and the Fall to be historical fact in order to find in the story the most effective primitive account of spiritual truths and realities. To say that Abraham was before Moses, the Gospel was prior to the law, is to utter a great truth quite independently of what any one may believe about Abraham or about Moses as historical facts or factors in the actual history of the world. The end of man is a truth in the mind of God and in the meaning and final cause of the universe prior to any of the means or incidents by which that end or destiny is at last attained. In human life the strict and careful discipline and training of childhood by external rule or law is a very necessary incident and means, but it is not an end in itself. To have learned obedience is a necessary thing, but unless obedience has become transmuted into something beyond and above itself, unless the spirit has absorbed and replaced the form, the status and nature of servants has not been exchanged for that of sons. Morality or formal righteousness may indeed be the law of the universe, but that is just precisely and distinctively what real righteousness is not. When we say that it is Love, we say that it is not a formal law but a living and personal Spirit; it is not a mere mode of things or actions, but the living Person within the true meaning and use of all things and actions. It was necessary that man should be taught the meaning of righteousness, and the necessity of his own righteousness, and the insufficiency of the law and his own will for righteousness, before finally

he could receive the manifestation of the divine righteousness in Christ, and the impartation to himself of the divine righteousness by the Holy Ghost. But the thing intended before the worlds and before the law was not that God should be a Creator of things, or a Lord of wills, but a Father of spirits.

We come now nearer down to the argument immediately before us. In the actual human redemption in Christ and in the perfect setting forth in His person of the accomplished propitiation, or reconciliation, or at-one-ment, wrought by His act and realized in Himself in our humanity, we have the final elucidation or clearing up of the long mystery, the hidden wisdom, of the divine righteousness and life. The thing to be cleared up first was the difference of God's treatment of unrighteousness under the old covenant and under the new. Under the old the treatment might be expressed by the general term *paresis*, the operation of which has been already partially described. God, upon condition of a certain necessary disposition on the part of the offender against the divine law, his own right attitude towards his offence, passed over the offence, put it aside, or covered it over, or remembered it no more, and in general treated it as though it had not been. The condition or ground of this pardon or forgiveness was that the sinner was conscious of his sin and repented him of it. His acknowledgment of transgression against righteousness was acknowledgment of the fact and claims of righteousness, and this is the necessary first step towards righteousness itself.

This right attitude was expressed, as has been explained, in the several offerings or sacrifices, all of which were substitutionary or vicarious. And in just that fact, as I have said, consisted their inefficiency for the perfect or complete ends of righteousness. They were confessions of not being, not sufficient and effectual means of being, righteous. An imperfect and impotent system like this, a scheme of righteousness which went only so far as to convince and convict of unrighteousness and fell so far short of producing righteousness, needed explanation. And in the light of the wholly effectual and sufficient mode or scheme of righteousness which succeeded and replaced it, it found its own explanation. The meaning of it lay in the fact that righteousness by law is only a step or a stage in the progress and attainment of actual or real righteousness. It is positive in its direction but negative in its reach or achievement. It demonstrates that man must be righteous, and with a righteousness of his own, but at the same time that he cannot be so by any process of self-righteousness or of self-righteousing. Any such true effort results inevitably not in attainment but in the sense of failure and in the knowledge by experience only of transgression and sin. God's treatment of this condition and spiritual attitude was as yet, under the old covenant, one only of pity and pardon. His response to man's only possible right consciousness and disposition was the only half-grace of mercy and forgiveness. The sin that the man would fain put away from himself God put aside,

and treated it as though it were not or had been in reality put away.

The response of the Gospel to the human sense of actual sin and unattainable holiness is not the half-grace of forgiveness but the whole-grace of redemption and deliverance. God manifests Himself in it, that is to say in Jesus Christ, not as pitier and pardoner of man in his sin, but as redeemer and saviour of man from his sin. He is there seen, in all the completeness of justifying, sanctifying, and saving grace, as at once Righteous and righteousing or Righteouser. That is to say, He is seen not only in the perfection of His own divine righteousness, but — what is just the point in the matter of our salvation — in the consummated and completed act of becoming, or fact of having become, our divine righteousness. In Jesus Christ God is literally become The Lord our Righteousness.

In the phrase which describes God in the Gospel, or in Jesus Christ, as being, as I have translated it, at once Righteous and Righteouser, righteousness in us as in Himself, there may arise again the old question of how He is our righteousness — whether by gracious imputation or by equally gracious impartation. The answer is, Certainly not by the former only, and yet, not less certainly, by the former in the beginning, even though by the latter only in the end. The point to be insisted upon is that in Jesus Christ is all and not only half of our salvation, that if He is imputed to us as righteousness, it is because He is our righteousness, and if He is so to us in faith, He will be to us so also in fact.

While we are upon the subject of the progressive unfolding of this true principle of the Gospel, it will be in place to trace the connection between the Gospel in the Gospels and the Gospel in its further elucidation or in its more scientific or philosophical interpretation by St. Paul. I have elsewhere undertaken to prove that the all-inclusive principle or germ of St. Paul's most developed Gospel is distinctly stated at the beginning of every one of the canonical Gospels; is repeated at the end of one of them as being the substance of what was to be preached to the world as the Gospel of Jesus Christ; was actually after the Day of Pentecost so preached by all the Jerusalem Apostles, and preached exclusively or as practically the sole burden of their preaching; and that then finally it was taken up, identically the same, and developed by St. Paul into the complete system which he has given us, consistent everywhere with itself, in his epistles. I will here repeat the general outlines of that argument.

John the Baptist is introduced at the beginning of all the Gospels preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission or putting away of sin. The repentance he preached was not in itself a putting away of sin, but only a preparation for, or pre-condition of, its putting away. Although John was last and greatest of the prophets, and although the putting away of sin was only the last and highest of the demands of the law, yet John's one, reiterated, confession was the impotence and insufficiency alike of him and it, for any real or actual putting away of sin. That was his

constant refrain. No preaching of his, no symbolizing of the need he preached of the putting away of sin, by the divinely significant rite of baptism, could produce or be its actual putting away, — which is at bottom, and not its mere putting aside or pardoning, the real thing needed. I baptize with water only, he said, and water cannot wash away sin or quicken in the soul the new birth of holiness. That requires something beyond law or prophecy, above the powers of nature or the will of man; it requires the thing witnessed by the very weakness of the law and anticipated by the prescience of prophecy — the long expected promise of the Spirit, which is the birth and life of God Himself in the soul of man.

John the Baptist's preaching and baptism contained everything that belongs to religion except, as he himself confessed, the power of it or the possibility of its realization. As has been more than once said, not only the primary condition but the actual first step in religion, by which we mean the right relation of man to God, is the knowledge and sense or feeling of his own condition, his wants, and above all his own not only shortcomings or failures but transgressions and sins; and not only his sins but his sin. The prodigal felt not only that he had sinned, but that, deeper than that, he was a sinner. Everything depends upon man's own attitude towards sin and his own sin. That attitude we express by the word *repentance*. Applying again the principle that a thing is truly defined only by what it is in its completeness, I say that repentance means

the putting away of sin. In the first place it means the actual putting it away, and in the second place it means the putting it away by the sinner himself. Any desire or any conferring of only pity or pardon is only, at the best, an imperfect or incomplete either repentance or remission. And in the second place, even God Himself can in the full sense confer the true remission or truly put away sin only as He can impart a true repentance or the inward disposition, power, and act of the man in himself putting away his sin. A real *aphesis* is neither if it is not both God's and the man's act.

John the Baptist in preaching repentance prophetically at least preached faith also. He taught that that which religion as yet lacked was in the approaching Kingdom of God about to be added, that all that it had ever meant it was now going to be seen to be. The baptism with sign only would give place to the baptism with substance. The circumcision made with hands would be replaced by that of the spirit, and the sacrifices that could not take away sin should be abolished for one that could and would. The law which had hitherto been above and beyond man was by the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ and through the power and operation of the eternal Spirit to be brought down from heaven, or up again from the death to which sin had consigned it, and seated upon its proper throne in the minds and hearts and lives of men. I repeat that in what John preached as prepared for by law, and foreseen and longed for by

prophets, and about to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ — viz.: the coming of God's own kingdom of holiness, righteousness, and divine life in man — we have the exact and complete matter of the whole Gospel.

Now just exactly what all the Gospels begin with, in St. Luke, who is the one to describe the transition of the Gospel from the hands of the Lord to those of the Apostles, the record of the ministry of Jesus Himself also ends with: Thus it is written, are our Lord's own last words, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all nations. Ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high. The meaning that underlies all the human experiences of Jesus Christ, His suffering, death, and resurrection from the dead, is this: that in these we see in Him, and by these we shall attain in Him, the death to and from sin, the repentance that is *unto* — that means, that attains, that is — the putting away of sin; or, what is the same thing on its positive side, the faith that sees in Christ, and that in Him achieves and attains, the putting on of the holiness, righteousness, and life of God.

Once more, what according to John the Baptist was to be the Gospel, what according to St. Luke our Lord declares in His last words is to be preached in His name as being the Gospel, the Jerusalem apostles with St. Peter at their head did actually preach as the

Gospel. The God of our fathers — they declared — raised up Jesus, whom ye slew. Him did God exalt to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance and remission of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him. The distinctive gift of the Gospel is, what was accomplished in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the effectual putting away of sin by death to it, and the effectual putting on of holiness and life by actual participation of the spirit and power of God in Christ.

How exactly this teaching of the other apostles was the substance of St. Paul's whole doctrine will appear, as everywhere else, so clearly enough, for example, in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. There St. Paul declares what his Gospel is, and warns us that, if Christ be not risen, then are his preaching and our faith alike emptied of their content, — For, says he, if Christ is not risen, we are yet in our sins, and those who have fallen asleep in Him have perished.

We might go on to show the identity of St. John's much later, and quite independent, declaration of what the Gospel of Christ is. We know, says he, that He was manifested to take away sin. And in Him is no sin. Why was there in Him as man no sin? Because He himself abolished sin in the flesh. And how as man did He do that? By resisting it unto blood, or unto death, and by the victory over it of His own human holiness in the spirit and power of God through faith. The power of God thus manifested in Him is

the self-same power with which God works in all who are in Him. For not only in Him is there no sin, but — Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not.

It is easy enough to say, but I do not think that it is possible upon right and sufficient reflection to believe, that this consistency of fundamental principle running through the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of Sts. Paul, Peter, and John, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, is in any part of it a matter of later arrangement or accommodation, — as for example that the teaching of John the Baptist, of our Lord as reported at the close of St. Luke's Gospel, and of St. Peter in the Acts of the Apostles, has been made subsequently to conform to the essential idea of St. Paul's developed doctrine. The agreement is too natural and unconscious, and at the same time too deep and real.

In concluding his statement of the righteousness of God, as distinguished from that of the law, St. Paul remarks of it that it excludes all boasting on the part of man. I cannot think that the Apostle's meaning is wholly expressed by the explanation that any claim of human merit is shut out in a system which is one not of works but of faith. Boasting, pride or conceit, the claim of merit or self-righteousness, is as much out of place in the works of the Christian as in his faith, his *fides sola*. I am not sure that that side of it is not more than the other in the mind of St. Paul. He does not hesitate to speak of his own works or labours, nor to claim that they are more abundant than those of

others, while never forgetting to add, Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. I labour also, he says, striving according to His working, which worketh in me mightily. And he bids us Christians to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, remembering that it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do. He claims that the sufficiency of his own abundant ministry is of God and not himself, and seeks to exercise it always as though God did so through him. I dwell on this not to prove that the Gospel of Christ is a system of the most strenuous works as well as of faith, because I do not suppose any one to deny this, but in order to make occasion to bring out an aspect of Christianity which is of infinite interest and importance, and which I think was in the mind of St. Paul. True Christianity, so far from limiting or lowering human freedom and personal activity, raises these to the highest pitch, far beyond the possibility of any other system of life or action. It bids us be able, and gives us the ability, to be all things, do all things, endure all things. It raises our faith, our hope, our desire and will, our purpose, and our power, up to the standard and goal of the divine perfection itself. There is nothing that so exalts man's conception of himself, or that engenders and encourages so high and holy an ambition in him — even to the becoming as God Himself. And yet the more the Christian covets earnestly the best gifts, and is ambitious of the highest that even God can give or make him, the more modest and humble he grows; because

the more he truly attains or accomplishes, the more conscious he is that it is all not of himself but of God. The greatness is indeed all his own, but the merit and the praise of it is all Another's. What has he that he has not received? It is not he, but God in him. This explains the anomaly that the most selfless and modest human being that ever lived, the meekest and lowliest in spirit, was He who made and established for himself the most unlimited claim. He was what He was — and He was everything — just because of Himself He was and could do nothing, because He sought not His own glory but only that of Him from and of whom He was.

And we can say something like it of St. Paul himself. He was, as we have said, of all the servants of Christ, the most abundant in the labours of Christ, and he was not unconscious of all that he had been and had done in the service of his Lord. But if any one ever did, in sincerity and truth, accept for himself all the grace, and give to God all the merit and the glory, of his greatness, it was the great Apostle.

One more word before St. Paul has done with his statement of the Gospel: What have we done with the law? Have we made it of none effect through faith? On the contrary, we have established it. Not only have we restored it to its equality with God, by exalting man's standard of obligation to the height of the divine perfection, but we have laid open the way by which man can discharge that obligation by attaining that perfection.

IX

THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM

What saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness.

Even as David also pronounceth blessing upon the man, unto whom God reckoneth righteousness apart from works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not reckon sin.

To Abraham his faith was reckoned for righteousness, — that he might be the father of all them that believe.

For not through the law was the promise to Abraham or to his seed, that he should be heir of the world, but through the righteousness of faith. For the law worketh wrath; for where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace; to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not as though they were.

Who in hope believed against hope. Without being weakened in faith he considered his own body now as good as dead (he being an hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yea, looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform. Wherefore it was reckoned unto him for righteousness.

Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was reckoned unto him; but for our sake also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. — ROMANS IV. 3–8, 9, 11, 13, 15–24.

IX

THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM

St. Paul's position is not merely that the Gospel was historically prior to the law, but that in principle it is the normal and only possible true or right status which man can occupy in his personal relation with God. The law itself by the inconsistency of its insistence and its impotence is a witness for the truth and necessity of that which has in it the power to produce that upon which it insists. In illustration and proof of the evangelical principle before as well as under the law, examples are given of the moral status before God especially of Abraham but also of David.

Abraham believed God, and that was accounted to him for righteousness. He is the type of the nearest nearness to God, the most accepted and acknowledged right relation with Him, possible for man, and the ground upon which he stands in that relation is distinctly stated not to be that of merit, or of a righteousness in himself which could justify him before God, but to be that of faith in God as One who accepts and justifies the contrite and penitent unrighteous. Now let us analyze and interpret this faith of Abraham. It was primarily a general and practical kind of faith;

there are no speculative questions or questionings involved in it. Abraham believed God; he trusted and depended upon Him absolutely and without limit or reserve. But not only did this faith extend in all directions and to all matters, but there are also distinct evidences in it of specialization and particular direction. The indefinite begins to become definite when faith assumes the form of trusting the love and goodness that God is, even when least conscious of any worthiness or most conscious of every unworthiness of that love and goodness. God accepts that trust and confidence on our part, — upon the express and definite condition of our own right spiritual and moral consciousness in the matter. Observe that there *is* a condition — and indeed a *conditio sine qua non.* Why does not the love and goodness of God go to what some conceive to be the more complete limit of blessing us without any condition at all? Why must there be the absolute condition of repentance and faith on our part? Because God cannot bless us with the spiritual and moral blessedness which our own nature demands, with which alone law and Gospel have to do, in which our very personality consists, apart from or without our own consciousness and co-operation in the matter. Our own attitude and action towards sin and holiness must be constituents and co-ordinates in the matter of the blessing, or the blessing cannot exist. We cannot be freed from sin save through and by our own putting away our sin, and we cannot be made holy save through our own love and will and activity of holiness. God

can do everything in the man, but only in the man who has the will and the faith to do everything in Him. He can even give us all the will and the faith necessary as our part, if only we resist and reject not the grace that imparts it; and that longs and strives to impart it: — How would I! — and ye would not.

When St. Paul describes Abraham as coming to and being accepted of God, not upon the ground of his own merit or with claim of his own righteousness, but with the spiritual insight to trust himself to the divine grace, he is describing that grace too as the divine insight to recognize in Abraham's sense of sin, and faith in God notwithstanding his sin, the human condition of its impartation. Abraham went no further, perhaps, than to see in God the grace that accepts the sinner. If he could have gone the full length of his own faith, he would have seen in Christ that God's accepting the sinner, not as what he is but as what he believes in and would be, is His way, and the only divinely practicable way, of making him, or of his own becoming, the thing he would and should be. He would have known too more perfectly, as all the children of his faith know just in proportion to the perfection of their faith, that the present peace through faith of those who are still sinners is only the foretaste and beginning of the real peace which we shall enjoy when we are no longer sinners. But it *is* a foretaste and a beginning, and God is true and just to recognize in those who as yet have only the sense of their sin and faith in His righteousness, not only the necessary condition, but all

the potential and even something of the actual presence of His own righteousness in Christ.

David's faith, too, in describing the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven and his sins covered, to whom the Lord will not impute or reckon sin, is thoroughly evangelical or on the line of the perfect salvation through Christ. But he does not see all the way to the full end actually accomplished in Christ. I not only admit that the *aphesis* described by him is no more than the *paresis* which St. Paul describes as the limit attained by grace before its final triumph in Christ, but I freely admit that the word in itself does not necessarily mean anything more than a putting away by forgiveness, and that actually in the New Testament it frequently does not go beyond that restricted meaning. But I hold that implicit in God's gift of remission in Jesus Christ, and equally so in man's acceptance of it, there is involved and included, out of and beyond the initial grace of acceptance and pardon, the ultimate and real grace of freedom and holiness. St. John's teaching does not go beyond St. Paul's, when he describes, first, the purpose of our Lord's coming to be the taking away of sin; secondly, the accomplishment of that purpose in the act and fact of His own sinlessness or victory in our nature over sin; and, thirdly, the proper end and result of the divine purpose and its accomplishment in Christ in our actual freedom from sin in and through Him.

I am not so much concerned in the actual historical fact and meaning of Abraham's faith as I am in St.

Paul's understanding and application of it. The Apostle's desire is not so much to find in the events of the New Testament literal proof and confirmation of the Old, as it is to find in the Old Testament language and ideas and illustrations with which to express and explain the independent and indisputable facts of the New. And it is, at the very least, wonderful to what an extent the entire texture of the Old Testament lends itself to this use, is capable of being applied to events which almost as much fulfil as they transcend its meaning.

Let us then review the story of Abraham's faith in its direct application to St. Paul's exposition of the faith in Christ that justifies and saves. Abraham's faith I described as being, first, a general one, and altogether practical and not speculative. Faith in God and in the essential verities of religion, it has been said, is not so much a conclusion of reason as a deed or achievement of character. The more one's whole mind and heart and will, one's entire personality and life, are exalted to unity and harmony with the spiritual and moral as well as physical or natural truth and order of the world, the more one is prepared and disposed to believe in and trust Him who is the Reality of them all. Abraham is the type of those who are great enough in themselves to know that God is and that He is the end and reward of all who seek and find Him.

But immediately, as we saw, St. Paul specializes or defines Abraham's faith as being in God who accepts and justifies the ungodly or unrighteous; justifies him, that is, of course, not on the ground of his being, but

on the ground of his knowing and feeling himself to be, ungodly and unrighteous, and coming notwithstanding to Him who, just because He is love and grace, is the fountain and source of all righteousness. There is no faith so true and strong as that which brings us to God in and in spite of, and even because of, our sins.

Abraham's faith, however, does not stop here. It attaches itself to a particular and definite promise and hope, which is at once God's meaning, and its own more or less conscious and understood meaning, in the whole matter. The promise of God before and under the law and its fulfilment in the Gospel, as the promise made to Abraham, or made to faith in his person, is the subject-matter of both Testaments. What is the substance or content of that promise and fulfilment? Assuredly it is not only the clearer revelation and assurance of the fact that God is faithful and free to justify the unrighteous, to accept and treat him as righteous. So much of justification and salvation is not all, nor the essence, of the Gospel. Here, I think, the true application and likeness or analogy of Abraham's faith to that of and in Christ comes in and fills out the whole great truth of God's gift of righteousness to the world.

The promise made to Abraham is the promise made before the worlds, planted in the very nature and running through all the history of man, — the promise to Faith, that it shall inherit and possess the earth, that through it all races and nations of the earth shall

receive and share the full and final blessing and blessedness of God Himself, His righteousness and His life. We see in this blessed promise and hope the source and inspiration of the indestructible Hebrew conviction that, all appearances and contradictions to the contrary notwithstanding, righteousness shall prevail and the kingdoms of the world shall become the Kingdom of God. Now this promise was made to Abraham through his seed; and the promise was deferred until it was as impossible for Abraham to beget as for Sarah to conceive the seed upon which the promise depended. The power, however, of God's Word to fulfil itself, and the sufficiency of Abraham's faith for the fulfilment through it of what God had promised, triumphed over the natural impossibilities in the way, and the seed was given. The proto-fulfilment in Isaac was itself a life out of death: for, in him, There sprang of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of heaven in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable. Abraham became physically the father of many nations. But that is not what St. Paul had chiefly in mind. As Aristotle was said to be the master of them that think or know, so Abraham is still the father of all who believe. His spiritual children have far outnumbered those of his flesh.

Thus Abraham became the father of us all before Him whom He believed; and thus God, first to him, manifested Himself as quickener of the dead, and caller of things that are not as though they were. But how did God so manifest Himself to Abraham? Abraham

did beget and Sarah did conceive and bear the promised seed. God's power to fulfil His word manifested itself in their own power to fulfil it. It was in and through them that God manifested Himself, and the manifestation consisted first in a power in them to produce, and then in their actual production of an issue which was at once born of them and yet not born of them but of God in them. Herein lay the likeness between the proto-fulfilment in Isaac and the real fulfilment in Christ of the divine promise made to faith in the symbolic or representative person of Abraham, of which we will now attempt the larger interpretation.

All the Old Testament promises fulfilled in Christ were primarily promises made to humanity, and to be fulfilled finally only in the general life and destiny of man. The interpretation of one such promise, which will do for all, may be studied in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. There is a promise made to man that, though for a time made lower than the angels, he shall be exalted above them and to the head of God's creation. Now as yet we see this promise very far from fulfilled in man, or in humanity at large, but we do see it most completely fulfilled in One Man, Christ Jesus; and fulfilled in Him as head and representative and forerunner of all. It pleased God, for and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect (first) the Captain of their salvation. The promises are made generally to man; they are fulfilled first in the Son of man; and then through Him they are fulfilled in all who are in Him.

So the promise made to Abraham is a promise made to faith in general; it is for his seed, in the sense that it is for those in all nations of the earth who are the children and inheritors of his faith. It is true that the Apostle says elsewhere that the promise is made not to Abraham's *seeds*, meaning many, but to his *seed*, meaning one, that is, Christ; but then he goes on immediately to say that as many of us as are Christ's, or in Christ, are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

What then, coming down at last to the point, was the distinctive promise made to faith in Abraham and fulfilled for faith in Christ? There is to the question, not a double answer, but a double mode of answering. In the first place, in the very fact of Jesus Christ in our humanity we have that which is a quickening of the dead, a new birth from the dead loins and the barren womb of our unassisted humanity. That which was born into the world in His person was born of the world, and yet was not born of the world but of God in the world. He was and yet was not son of man, in that He was son preeminently of God, and son of man only as Son of God in man. And in the second place, if we look away from Who Christ is in Himself to What He is in us, the lesson from Abraham's faith becomes yet more intelligible to us. Jesus Christ is God in us for holiness, righteousness, and life; He is God our holiness, righteousness, and life. The righteousness born in Him into the world is a righteousness not of nature, nor of the will of man, but of God.

It is ours, and yet it is emphatically not ours but God's in us. And yet God fulfils Himself in us only in that which is ourselves also and our own. Our righteousness is as divine as it is human, and as human as it is divine. It is just precisely as divine-human as our Lord Himself is, because it is in fact not ourselves but He in us. Our righteousness, like Isaac, is child not of nature but of grace. It is indeed of ourselves, in that it is only what we ourselves are and do, but it is also not of ourselves, because it is only of the power of God in us to will and to do, and so to be.

The righteousness of God looked at in this way is not alone that beginning of faith which sees already in God the power and the promise and so the certitude of our future righteousness, but it is the same faith viewed as grown to fruition, God wholly in us and we wholly in God unto the attainment of an actual complete righteousness of God in ourselves.

We can readily now, I hope, go on with St. Paul to see how Abraham's faith is ours in kind; and ours is accounted righteousness to us as his was to him, if, as he became the father of Isaac and of us all by transcending the possibilities of nature and the powers of his own flesh and will through faith in God's word, we too, in the more perfect Word of God, which is Jesus Christ Himself, see and find all our common humanity raised from the death of its own unrighteousness, and impotence for righteousness, into the divine power for righteousness which is through the indwelling of God Himself in us, our Righteousness.

X

THE STATUS OF THE CHRISTIAN BELIEVER

Being therefore justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and let us rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and not only so, but let us also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, probation; and probation, hope; and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost which was given unto us. — Romans V. 1–5.

X

THE STATUS OF THE CHRISTIAN BELIEVER

We come now to describe more practically and particularly the state or status of the Christian believer before God. As that status is represented as having been fixed or determined for us by an act of our Lord, the act of His death, and as that death is described as a sacrifice and in general in terms of the ancient ritual system of the Jews, it is a good time to begin to ask ourselves to what extent, or whether, we are still to be bound in the expression of our Christianity by that obsolete phraseology and circle of ideas. I will answer the question at present only so far as to endeavour to determine the use we are going to make just now of that phraseology. To go no further as yet, I am convinced that the term *sacrifice* and the idea or principle for which it stands can never be dispensed with. To begin with, it is not Jewish but universal, and although it has been and still is undergoing the refining and purifying treatment to which all human thought and feeling needs to be continuously subject, yet all future progress in the matter can be only in the direction of its better understanding and fuller appropria-

tion. At the same time it ought to be finally decided that we are going to interpret the meaning of sacrifice by the universal and eternal truth of it realized in the life and death of Christ, and not going to bring that truth down to fit into the little system of Jewish, or any other incomplete and imperfect human, thought or understanding of it. In other words, we shall interpret the sacrifice of Christ by itself, or in its independent and inherent significance, and make use of all prior meanings or uses of sacrifice as only pointing to and not at all sufficing to express or explain it.

One other principle of method or procedure I wish to make plain. As humanity will never be known except in the completeness of its exposition in Jesus Christ, so Jesus Christ cannot be known except in most essential and universal terms of our humanity. To understand our Lord in any act or situation of human life it is necessary to understand what is the eternally proper or right human attitude or action in that situation. And so in general I would say that what Jesus Christ did in our humanity in order to be our salvation was just precisely what humanity needed of itself to be and to do in order to be saved. We exactly express or explain any act of His, and so the supreme and decisive act, when we say that humanity did it in His person, and that it was just precisely what humanity needed to do in order to its own redemption and completion. In His person humanity righted itself with God, redeemed itself from sin, raised itself from death. And how did it do so? As alone, in the nature

of the thing and in the nature of the case, it could do so, — by undergoing that spiritual, moral, and natural change or transition, from the evil it needed to be saved from to the good it needed to be saved to, which was in itself necessary to constitute its salvation. It needed by a personal act of its own to pass from sin into holiness and from death into life, and it could do so only by such an attitude towards sin as involved a resistance or denial of it unto death, and such an attitude towards holiness as involved an attainment of it through faith unto life. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was in act and in fact humanity's death to sin and resurrection to God and holiness and eternal life. Of course it was so actually to Himself only in the beginning, but thenceforth it was potentially so for all. How it is potentially, and may be actually so for all, is a part of the Gospel plan of which the exposition lies before us. Up to the present point I would answer to any question of how we are saved by the death or the blood or the sacrifice of Christ simply in the well-known line of the poet: In His death our sins are dead.

Two features of the above representation require a little more attention. It involves the truth that Jesus Himself in His humanity needed the salvation which all humanity needs. Salvation for Him, as for us demanded that conflict with sin and conquest of sin which was preeminently His experience and His achievement. Salvation for Him as for us was impossible either as a mere fact of nature or as an attainment

of His own human will. The power of God unto salvation through faith was necessary for Him as for us, and that power manifested itself in Him, as it must in us, in the perfection of His human obedience unto death, even the death of the cross. Through His own blood He entered into the holiest, having found eternal redemption. That is to say, through the perfect loss or offering up of Himself He eternally found or attained His true Self.

The other point that needed attention is this: Christianity, it may be said, does not involve in fact for us such an experience and such an achievement as needs so extreme an expression as is indicated by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Are we so sure of that? Of course a thing is properly defined only at its highest and by its highest. We are doing that when we define ourselves by Jesus Christ. In His death and resurrection we are defining repentance and faith, the right human attitude towards sin and holiness, at their limit, carried to their very end. But sooner or later, if we are to be saved to the end, have not we all to know sin to the very end and holiness to the very end, — sin to the extreme limit of experiencing its death, and holiness to the similar limit of knowing its life? Salvation in the highest is nothing less nor lower than the actual knowledge, and such a knowledge, of sin as death, and holiness as life, as will *be* in us a death to sin and a life in holiness.

The above being understood as the ground upon which we stand, the sure basis of our present and

future status with God, St. Paul describes with great clearness what ought to be our subjective personal attitude and feeling in the relation in which it places us with God: Being therefore justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and let us rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but let us rejoice also in our tribulations. The first immediate consequence of the blessedness made ours in Jesus Christ is the sense of *present peace.* It is necessary to make a distinction between this present peace and what we may term *real peace,* — if it be only for the purpose of taking in the gift of God in its entirety, its end as well as its beginning and progress. We can have or enjoy real peace only as we are in that state or condition — or, as Aristotle so insists, in that *not* mere state or condition but perfect energizing or personal activity — which alone is the condition of perfect peace, or of which alone perfect peace is the accompaniment and the expression. To one who is ill and about to die it would bring great present peace to know that he was brought into possession of certain cure and so of assured recovery and health. But the real peace to the sick man is health itself, and the wonderful comfort and peace brought to him by a sure faith in it and a certain hope of it is, in a large measure at least, only proleptic or anticipatory. In a large measure, but not wholly so. The patient may find in his very anticipation and hope a real beginning and pro-

gress of the return of actual health, and so his possession and enjoyment may be not all only future; and the believer not only looks forward in faith and hope to the actual fruition of God and holiness and life, but has an ever increasing foretaste of them now. That, too, is real peace so far as it goes, and is to be classed, in theological language, rather with the real peace of sanctification and final glorification than with the immediate present peace of justification. When St. Paul says that we are saved by or in hope, he must mean that the *res* or substance of our salvation is still future, although our present assured faith in it and the earnest or foretaste of it which we already enjoy are enough to constitute a present salvation, to justify us in saying that we *are* saved.

But, however there must be in the earliest beginning of at least the consciousness of justification something too of a beginning of sanctification, and so from the start a mixing of the real peace that comes so slowly from what we are with that which comes so immediately and abundantly from the discovery of what God is to us, yet must we accept and appreciate the distinction between them, if we are to have full experience of what the Gospel is to us now as well as what it has in store for us in the end. If the worst sinner at this moment in the world could be brought to an immediate spiritual apprehension of the full meaning of Christian baptism, what it is that is made all ours by that divine instrument, assuredly that act of spiritual apprehension on his part would be the first tremendous

step in the process of real righteousness, or sanctification, on his actual way to God. But of real righteousness, or righteousness of his own, how little would it be! Of real reception or reception by actual participation there could indeed be but a drop from the infinite ocean; but on the other hand, by the reception of faith and hope, or of anticipatory appropriation, it can be all his in a moment. He may in one ecstatic sweep of vision behold all God become human, his own, righteousness and life. In that one happy moment, or in the longer happy moment of his whole earthly life of faith and hope, it is not his own paltry attainment of personal righteousness or life with which God credits him. Rather is it all that his faith takes in and appropriates to itself of the infinite and eternal righteousness of God Himself. All of Jesus Christ, who is God's promise and gift to us of His own divine righteousness, — all of Jesus Christ, who is consequently also our own perfect actual participation in the righteousness of God — is reckoned, accounted, or imputed to, is as it were put to the credit of, the worst sinner who by a true faith accepts and appropriates Him to himself.

The peace, therefore, which we are enjoined now to have and enjoy is what I should call the anticipatory peace of a perfect faith. It does not rest upon the existence within ourselves of all the conditions necessary in ourselves to a real peace. It rests rather upon the assurance that all those conditions have been realized in Christ, and through Him are to be realized in us. Meantime we do not wait for their full realization in

ourselves to have free access to and be at peace with God, but appropriate to ourselves, as He imputes to us, in advance, the freeness and fulness of all that He is to us — not yet in ourselves, but — in Jesus Christ. In proportion as we rest the terms upon which we are with God upon real grounds to be found in ourselves, will our relations with Him, our peace, be weak and low and fluctuating. In proportion as we rest it upon what our faith embraces and anticipates of the infinite all that He is to us in Christ and we are in Him in Christ, will our peace even now be full of a glory that may be future in its existence in us but is very present in its existence for us.

Consequently the Apostle links very closely and indissolubly with the possession of present peace the hope or assurance of future glory: Let us know and enjoy now the peace of being on terms of the most unrestricted access to and fellowship with God, but let us know that these terms could not exist if they did not mean and look forward and lead up to the final and full glory of a real spiritual oneness with God, no longer existing only in Another for us, but in ourselves in The Other. The expression Glory of God, as that which we are exhorted to rejoice in the hope of, can, I think have no other meaning than that we give it in the old saying that glory is only sanctification completed, as sanctification is glory begun. It is full participation, no longer only in the divine will and purpose and promise to bless us with Himself, but in the fulness and completion of that blessedness, no longer

objectively ours in Christ, but subjectively, now, all our own through Christ in us.

And here comes in the third point of the Apostle's exhortation to us as necessary to the practical realization of our relation to God in Christ. We are to be as much at peace with God now as though we actually fulfilled in ourselves all the real conditions upon which that peace depends and in which it consists. We may rightly be so, because in God's Word, which is Christ, we may rejoice in the certain hope that we shall be in ourselves all that now we are only in Him. But now what shall we say as to the passage or transition from the relation to God in Christ of *faith only* to that of real participation and identity? The one exists only that it may pass over into the other; how is that passage to be effected or accomplished? How is Christ for us to become Christ in us, or the divine righteousness imputed to transmute itself into the same righteousness imparted? How, in a word, is our present peace to attain to all the reality of future glory?

Let me pause for a moment to remark that there need be, and should be, nothing of mere other-worldliness in what we are now talking about. I am not thinking of any other place or condition or outward circumstances of life or activity than those we know. Here or elsewhere life with its means or ends is practically the same. The only other-world that I am capable of really thinking about is the world of that other thing or other self that, wherever I am, it can but be my sole end or aim to become, if I am to be

saved from what I am. My glory or my heaven is nothing to me that I do not supremely want here and now. And I know not, and do not think about, any way or means of attaining or securing them other than those that lie before me. All that I propose to myself in the furthest future is only the consummation and fruition of all that is worth striving or living for here, or anywhere else.

The great value of what St. Paul has now to tell us may be expressed in this truth: that the only way from faith to fruition, from what we believe in and aim at to what we shall attain and be, from life in Christ for us to the life of Christ in us, is the way of suffering. The many sons of God can be brought unto glory only as the One Son, the Author and Captain of their salvation, was brought — by being made perfect through sufferings. This is, of course, the tritest common place of Christianity, but there is that in St. Paul's treatment of it here which looks more deeply than we are wont to see into the reason or philosophy of the matter. Even Christians are in the habit of speaking of the existence of trial and suffering and of evil in general as a mystery of which we can have no understanding on the whole, although in part we may recognize the uses to which it is actually put in the discipline of life. But St. Paul's philosophy is not merely, I think, that, evil existing, we know not why or how, it is turned to account, overruled as we say, and made a means of good to us, by the power greater than itself. Rather is it that, in the very nature of it,

all real good, natural or spiritual, is won against, is a victory over, an opposite ill. Pleasure, if it is not only a survival of or relief from pain, is at least developed in consciousness by contrast with and conquest of it. Virtue or true manhood is every inch of it not merely won by but the very product or fruit of conflict with and conquest of its opposite. The holiness of Jesus Christ Himself was as much negatively the denial and annulment of its opposite, sin, as it was the affirmation and establishment of itself through a positive union with the Spirit and will and life of God. We could not, however we might try, conceive of a spiritual, personal creation developed otherwise than through conditions practically identical with those to which we take the chief exception in the world as it is. It seems to me, therefore, that St. Paul in the language we are about to consider selects the very best terms in which to express the philosophy of pain, temptation, and trial, not merely as existing and as what we have to live in spite of, but as necessary to us and what we have to live by means of. It is a vindication or justification of the fact that the divinest as well as most human act, the most divinely human and humanly divine act, actual or possible in the history of our universe, had to be enacted and expressed in terms of the most inconceivable humiliation, trial, and suffering. It is an interpretation of the facts and circumstances of our own existence, in which all the most extreme contrasts and contradictions meet and contend, and for which there is no possible explanation but that it

is the scene and the condition necessary not only for the testing or proving but for the determining and developing of personal character and life.

If, says St. Paul, in the possession of our present peace we rejoice in the hope of our future glory, then must we rejoice likewise in the necessary steps or means by which that glory is to be achieved, in all the passive and active experiences through which it is to be won. It is not that the glory of not only believing but being what Christ is is earned by endurances and acts which in themselves may be different from and independent of the end attained by them, but that every trial endured and act performed in and for Christ enters constituently into and forms a part of the glory that is His and that thus becomes ours. Christ already in us by faith the hope of glory becomes Christ in us in fact the substance and reality of glory, only in the enduring with His power of survival and in the acting with His assurance and certainty of achievement and attainment. So, says St. Paul, If we rejoice in our glory as it manifested itself in Christ, in what He endured and how He endured, in what He did and how He acted, let us rejoice in enduring the same things in the same way, and in accomplishing the same things in and with the self-same grace and power. That was the glory of Christ and that is the only sharing in His glory which we have warrant for rejoicing in the hope of. Let us rejoice in our tribulations then, first, because tribulation worketh, not merely a more passive patience, but a more active endurance. The word may be made to

include every high and holy reaction on our part against every possible assault made upon us from without; such an attitude towards, such a resistance to, such a survival of, whatever may assail us, as will in itself be a victory over every form of evil that the world can oppose to us. All such opposition to and power over evil can be nothing else than dependence in and the power of the opposite and opposing good. There is no hatred of the devil but the love of God, and there is no power over evil but the power of good.

The next term expresses yet more clearly the reflex effect in and upon ourselves of the right withstanding of the evil without ourselves. The right reaction upon our environment will produce within ourselves a quality, a settled character, an acquired nature, which can scarcely be expressed by any single word at our command. Probation will not do, because it designates rather the process by which the result is reached than the result itself of the process. Indeed it does not express so much. The process of our sanctifying, of our actual righteousing, and final glorifying, is not one of mere testing or proving or trying, but one of true determining or making. It is the only possible process in and by which we may be determined in and through our own self-determination and be made by our own becoming. At the same time we can be determined or determine ourselves only in reaction with our actual environment, and the result of a right reaction is a right quality, character, or acquired nature of our own. How may we better designate or describe that than as

a quality of triedness, provedness, and approvedness; the quality of having stood and withstood all, of having met all the conditions, tests, and trials of life, and of having so met them as to have rightly reacted with or upon them, that is, to have been acted upon and acted as we ought. This is something of the etymological meaning and actual force of the word used here and generally to describe the true and right effect upon and in us of the divine discipline of life.

Now, says St. Paul, when we have thus endured, and been thus disciplined and proved, or in the process of being thus disciplined and proved, *hope* is wrought in us. Faith is of something in God, hope is of something in ourselves. We have faith in what God is to us and in us, we have hope in what we shall become in God. It is only in the stress and trial of our own actual becoming, it is only as after experience of our own weakness we have experienced the power of God in us to become, that we begin really to know what hope is. When we have tested our resources and found them sufficient for us, when we have again and again proved our armour in actual battle and by repeated victory, above all when we have acquired something of the facility of use and the habit of victory, then do we know as we cannot know prior to experience the joy and assurance of a reasonable, religious, and holy hope. And this hope maketh not ashamed; it cannot be defeated or disappointed. Why? Not merely because what God has promised He is able as well as faithful and just to perform, but because we have

placed our hope in that which in itself is as indestructible as it is satisfying and sufficient, the one only thing in which we shall not come to permanent spiritual and moral as well as intellectual confusion.

More specifically, the Apostle says, Hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. This means primarily, of course, the love of God Himself to us of which experience makes us constantly more and more both sensible and receptive. But, if this love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost not only imparting but imparted, we may be sure that it will be in us a love of God of which we shall be the subjects as well as the objects, a love with which we shall ourselves love as well as be loved. For after all we are really blessed and saved not so much in that which we have freely received as in that which we as freely give. God for us and to us is only in faith our salvation; He is in fact our salvation only as God in us.

XI

SAINT PAUL'S TERMINOLOGY

Through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. — ROMANS V. 2.

For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father. — EPHESIANS II. 18.

In whom we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in Him. — EPHESIANS III. 12.

Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit. Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye yourselves also with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that ye no longer should live in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. — 1 PETER III. 18, and 4, 1, 2.

God commendeth His own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, shall we be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life. — ROMANS V. 8, 10.

XI

SAINT PAUL'S TERMINOLOGY

I WISH in this chapter to illustrate in some typical instances St. Paul's understanding and use of words, and especially of the words most characteristic of and associated with his system of thought. I will select several in the passage immediately before us in the order of his own argument.

He speaks of our *access* to God through Jesus Christ: Through whom we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. He says elsewhere, too, Through Him we both (Jew and Gentile) have our access in one Spirit unto the Father. And again, In whom we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in Him. The First Epistle of St. Peter is very Pauline in its essential positions, and there is one passage in it which I think throws light upon the meaning of this access. The word means literally a *bringing to:* Christ suffered for sin, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might *bring* us *to* God. Now let us quite independently ask ourselves what this bringing us to God must mean. For after all the thing has to be interpreted by itself and nothing

else, or by anything else only as it helps us to understand itself. It certainly is not only a local bringing, and on the other extreme it cannot ultimately mean anything short of the most real spiritual or personal bringing. In fact, distance from God is both constituted and measured by sin, and conversely approach to Him by holiness. It is our sin that separates us from Him and our holiness that approximates us to Him. We are approximated by becoming assimilated. And Jesus Christ brought us to God, or reconciled us to God, or at-one-d us with God, in the first instance, by actually bringing us — our nature, our life, our selves, in His person — into personal oneness with God, and so abolishing the enmity and annihilating the distance between us. How did He do this? By the personal act of His own human holiness. In that act He, in Himself first, abolished sin in humanity, and created and established holiness. He was not, as I have frequently said, sinless or holy *just so*, by necessary or simple fact of nature. His holiness was the one unbroken act and achievement of His life, the act by which atonement, redemption, and resurrection, all in one, were accomplished in Him for us, and by us in Him. Neither did He accomplish holiness — humanly, or in the nature common to Him and us — of or by Himself, but in the way in which alone human holiness is possible, by union through faith of God with Himself and of Himself with God; and so He opened and established a way of holiness not for Himself alone but for all in Him. For we are partakers with Him if

we hold fast the beginning of our confidence (in Him) steadfast unto the end.

More definitely, according to St. Peter, we were brought to God in Christ by the act which he describes as a being put to death in the flesh and being quickened in the spirit. That death in the flesh and life in the spirit is, as we shall more and more see, St. Paul's formula for both what was accomplished in our Lord and is to be accomplished in us if we are to know in Him the full reality of our salvation. Whether St. Peter here uses the words in the full sense of St. Paul may be a question. He certainly seems to include that sense when, a little farther on, he says: Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye also yourselves with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that ye no longer should live the rest of your time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. We best, I repeat again and again, understand our Lord's death and resurrection when we interpret it in terms of what needs to take place in ourselves in the completing and completeness of our stand and attitude against sin and for God and His holiness and righteousness.

When I say that our bringing to God by and in Jesus Christ cannot stop short of the fulness of its meaning, and that that fulness of meaning can be nothing less than our complete approximation to God by personal assimilation with Him, I am so far from affirming that the word implies or expresses all this in the three passages quoted from St. Paul himself, that

the fact that it does not do so is just what I wish to call attention to, as not only characteristic of him but actually constituting the prominent point of his Gospel. Our access to God in the sense in which he means it is immediate and complete, whereas the real access described above, our real bringing to God, cannot but be in its very nature processive and progressive and always in the future. The explanation of this feature is the key to St. Paul's spiritual position. The interpretation which I would urge as best reconciling all difficulties is as follows:

There is no discrepancy in the meaning of the thing itself under discussion; the differences are all in our changing relations to the thing. The thing itself, our salvation, can have but one meaning; it is nothing more nor less nor other than oneness with God, freedom from sin, resurrection from death. And all these can be nowhere else for us than in ourselves; nothing else than these in all their actuality in ourselves will be *re ipsa* our salvation, that which God proposes to us as the end of the Gospel. We are very far from seeing these realized actually in their totality in any one of ourselves; and yet we know perfectly that that is what our salvation means with God and cannot but mean for, as it ought to mean with, us. But, if we do not see ourselves as yet so exalted, we do see One crowned and glorified, and in that One we are bidden of God to see ourselves. For He is God's promise and fulfilment and revelation to us of us all. The end of God's Gospel to us all and every one is all that Jesus Christ

Himself is in the actualized completeness of our common humanity. And He is to us the Way as well as the Truth and the Life. He is the revelation to us not only of the end but of the process or means of our salvation. He was perfected as we need to be perfected, and we can be perfected only as He was, — through the action upon us of the world as it is and the manner and character of our own reaction with and upon and against it.

Now it was St. Paul's peculiar mission and function to represent the obligations and claims of faith. The essence of spiritual action is to know and believe God. When our Lord said, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God shall man live, — He meant, Man shall not live by sense alone, by nature alone, or himself alone, but by Him of whom all these and all else are but signs and outward expressions. Jesus Christ Himself differed from all others and all things else in that He alone was the direct, immediate Word Itself or Personal manifestation and expression of God. To believe Him was in a peculiar and absolute sense to believe God. As St. John expressed it, Not to believe Him was directly and absolutely to make God a liar. Now with St. Paul as much as with St. John, Jesus Christ was at once God's word and reality of ourselves, our salvation, our eternal life. What God so *says* — to faith *is*. A true and right faith will speak of Christ in terms of ourselves, and of ourselves in terms of Christ. He is we and we are He in the meaning and sight of God, and what we are

in the sight of God we ought to be in the eye of faith; for what is faith but a taking God at His word, and seeing and meaning as He sees and means?

Of course, then, God treats us as being all that Christ is for us and to us and is to be in us. And taking ourselves as God takes us, our free and filial access to Him does not wait until God shall make us, but is deeply content to come to Him for what He will take us, in Christ Jesus. It is this immediate access, this present peace with God, this resting in and upon Jesus Christ alone as our ground of acceptance and of loving filial union and communion with God, that constitutes what St. Paul describes as this state of grace in which we stand.

Observe, then, what cannot be avoided, this duality of point of view springing out of our differences of relation to one and the same thing. When God or our own faith represents us as in Christ, it is not only Christ's righteousness that is reckoned or accounted or imputed to us, but everything else that is Christ's in His humanity. We are dead with Him, and risen, ascended, glorified, completed. Not only so, but the one term which theology reserves to express not what we are in completion in Christ, but what we are in process and in present incompleteness, is itself turned against that use and falls in with the other terms, in the opposite ranks. Theology says that to righteous or justify must be used in tenses of completed action, but to sanctify in those of incomplete or continuing action. We were, or have been, or are, justified; but we are

being, or are in process of becoming, sanctified. But how does St. Paul look at it? He describes the Church at Corinth — not at that time a specially advanced body in actual spiritual attainment — as those who had been and were sanctified in Christ Jesus and so were called to be or to become holy. That is to say, they were called or treated as being holy in Christ Jesus, and at the same time were recognized as not being and called to become holy in themselves. This illustrates what I have said about its being a matter not of difference in the thing but only of our relation to the thing. When our relation to Christ is real and complete we shall be holy; as our relation to Christ is real but not complete, we are becoming holy or are being sanctified; as our relation to Christ is viewed as one of faith only, and apart as yet from any actual sanctification through Him, His holiness, as His righteousness and everything else that is humanly His, is accounted or reckoned or treated as ours and consequently spoken of as being completed. The more modern complete distinction of justification and sanctification is therefore not as definitely scriptural as may be thought. At the same time it is useful if not necessary, and only needs to be guarded and understood. The different points of view represented by the terms cannot but be kept in mind, and as a matter of fact run all the way through the argument immediately before us.

The love of God which is the original source and cause of all our salvation or blessedness, as it constitutes

our present peace with God, so may be relied upon for our hope of future glory. The love of God antedates not only, of course, any response to it, but any desert or desire of it on our part. If when we were ungodly and unrighteous, helpless subjects and slaves of our sins, God so loved us as, altogether of Himself, for the praise of the glory of His own grace, apart from any merit or answer or anticipation of love on our part — nay, while we were yet enemies to Him — if then and thus God so loved us as, at such a price or cost, to provide for us so great a salvation; if upon the ground of the salvation thus provided, and our acceptance of it with a faith answering to His grace, He receives us into a state or status of complete filial relationship with Himself and takes no account of anything within us save our need and our will to be saved, — if all this be so, can or will He fail us in what remains, the task and attainment of our actual salvation? The distinction is kept up between our salvation in faith and our salvation in fact, and the argument is that if God so gave Christ objectively to our faith He may be trusted to give Him subjectively in our lives. Whether objectively, however, to our faith or subjectively in our lives, Christ is always one and the same thing — our own divine holiness, righteousness, life. We do not believe in Him at all if we do not believe in Him as all these not only for us but in us. Justification and sanctification are not two things in themselves, they are one and the same thing viewed in different relations on our part to it. The thing is Jesus Christ our

Righteousness, or God our Righteousness in the person of Jesus Christ. The different relations to it on our part are, (1) that righteousness apprehended and appropriated to ourselves by faith, in all its completeness; upon which God accepts and treats us as actually possessing it; this is what is meant by our justification, or our status of present peace and fellowship with God; and (2) that righteousness, which is Jesus Christ Himself, through the constant association and participation of faith with Him, gradually but actually imparting Himself to us so as to become to us not only a righteousness in which we believe but one which at least we begin to possess; this is what in process or progress we call our sanctification, and when it is completed it will be our glory or glorification.

Seeing, says St. Paul, that prior to anything whatever on our part *pro*, and even despite everything on our part *contra*, God has done for us all that was involved in the death of Jesus Christ, how much more having been thus justified in His blood shall we be saved through Him from wrath? Or, to put it in another way, If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, how much more having been thus reconciled shall we be saved in His life? In these two ways of stating it we have, first, the objective relation to Christ and consequent status with God expressed in the terms justified and reconciled. That means that God accepts Christ as our righteousness or as our reconciliation or at-one-ment with Himself, and consequently accepts us in the person of Christ

as at one with Him and as righteous. In this God accepts Christ as what He actually and literally is, humanity actually at one with Himself and actually righteous; and He accepts us as in faith and hope wholly at one with Him and become righteous, because through that faith and hope we are potentially and shall be actually so.

We are justified in the blood of Christ, or reconciled through His death; the phrases are identical in meaning. We shall have much more to say about our Lord's death or blood; it is enough to say that the meaning here is that in Christ's death our sins are dead. The death He died was a death to sin, and the life He lives is a life to God. It could not be said that in His death our sins are dead, if there were not sufficient grounds for our reckoning ourselves too as dead to sin in His death and as alive to God in His life. Neither could we in faith so account ourselves if in fact there were not a way in which His death may actually become our death and His life our life. This way we have to learn more of as we proceed.

Our subjective relation to Christ, in the second place, or the consequence within ourselves of our objective relation to Him, is, in St. Paul's two ways of stating it, the being saved through Him from wrath, or the being saved in His life. These two phrases again are synonymous or equivalent. To be saved from wrath means with St. Paul, as I hope more and more clearly to show, to be saved from what may as truly be described as the natural consequences of sin as they are, from the

spiritual and moral point of view, represented by him as the judicial or penal consequences of sin. To say that the wages of sin is death, or that the soul that sinneth it shall die, or to speak of the necessary sequence of sin and death, as cause and consequence, as a law — may be equally truly the language of scientific fact and the expression of divine action. Of course something depends upon what we shall see to be St. Paul's meaning of death. Read again the latter half of the first chapter of this Epistle to the Romans, to see that the penalty of sin is sin itself; its curse is that it breeds more and more of itself, and the death and hell to which it is condemned are nothing but itself multiplied and left to itself. Consequently I say that to be saved from wrath is identical with being saved in Christ's life; it is to be saved from the death which sin is in itself, in the life which as death to sin is the death of death itself also.

XII

THE FIRST AND THE LAST ADAM

As through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned: — for until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression who is a figure of Him that was to come.

So then as through one trespass the Judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous. And the law came in beside, that the trespass might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly: that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. — ROMANS V. 12–14 and 18–21.

XII

THE FIRST AND THE LAST ADAM

It is not essential to St. Paul's truth or argument what he thought or what we may think of his illustrations as historical facts. All we want of them is what of pertinence or of help there may be in them as illustrations. His object is not to prove them, but something by means of them. It is the something that concerns us, and not the symbol or parable or example used to help us understand it. We ourselves within a generation have undergone revolutions in our traditional beliefs of historical truth and natural fact which we once thought part of our religious faith, and have made for ourselves the oft-repeated discovery that the removal of the things that are shaken does not involve the change of those that may not be shaken. It is impossible but that St. Paul had his traditional beliefs that were subject to change, and that he used them in expression and illustration of the things that cannot change. I will endeavour to confine myself to what of permanent and unchangeable truth is expressed for us in the comparison and contrast of the two Adams.

The matter now thoroughly brought before us is our universal interest in an act of Jesus Christ, and our

universal relation to the person of Jesus Christ. The act was the lifelong and death-completed one of His conquest of sin, or, viewed on its positive side, the resurrection-completed one of His victory of holiness and life. The question is, how can that act of His be the act of us all? The other question involved in this is one as to His person. How is it not only that that act of His is the act of us all, but that He Himself is one with us all; so that all and each of us can speak or think of our real or true self only in terms of Him; and that, not merely as the example of what we ought to be, or the author of our right being, but as in a deeper and more intimate and real sense our own living, present, better, or best selves? How in a word is Christ so universal and eternal in us all?

This is a truth or fact of experience in itself, and apart from any resemblance or analogy to be found elsewhere in our experience; but there is a resemblance or analogy that may be of help to us in apprehending or in explaining it. We are speaking of where our holiness and our life come from, and how they come, — let us ask ourselves where our sin comes from and our death, or how *they* come. Let us observe here, by the way, that the death and life spoken of, as vital to the argument, are not natural but spiritual death and life. The death is the death that sin is, and the life is that which holiness is. St. Paul describes us as dead or alive according to these, and altogether independently of the physical facts. Now, then, our sin and our death are not individual facts; they do not originate

with ourselves but are wholly prior to ourselves. Whence then and how do they come? Sin and death are not individual but race facts. All humanity has sinned, and sins, and dies as one man. If we call this act or condition a *fall*, because not sin and death but holiness and life are its true law and liberty and blessedness, then humanity fell or is fallen as one man. Let us call that *one* Adam, Man, Humanity. Then we say that, in Adam all fell, all sin, all die. It makes no difference whether we say that his act was the act of all, or that, because the act of all was in fact one, we merely express that fact by representing it as his act. The truth is simply this, that our sin in its origin and in its universality is not ours but Adam's, Man's, Humanity's sin, and we are only recipients and participants of it.

It would remove several difficulties and not at all alter the truth or force of St. Paul's argument if, in Rom. v. 12, we should interpret the Apostle as saying, not that as a matter of fact *through one man* sin entered into the world, but that *as through one man* sin entered into the world. And when he adds, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned, — I ask, not as yet how much St. Paul meant to say, but only how much of truth there was in what he said. He continues, For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression. Let us put all this

to ourselves in a different way. Since Adam, that is, since man was man, sin has been in the world. And sin has been universal, reigning in its consequences or in its ravages even over those who had not themselves, or personally, committed sin. For, besides that sin in a sense reigns in us even prior to our own sinning, as in the case of the very young, many who actually sin do not really sin, or are not sinners in their acts. The paradox can be explained only by the old distinction between the matter and the form of a thing. St. Paul expresses it as follows: sin exists even when and where there is no law; that is, the *matter* of sin. But sin is not imputed when there is no law; that is, the *form* of sin. It is the law only that gives *form* to sin, or that makes sin sinful. We might say that sin is not sinful until it is *informed*, until it knows or understands itself; to him who *knows* it to be sinful it is sinful; to him who innocently does not, it is not sinful. But materially, or in the matter of it, it is the same in both cases; and the natural consequences, what we might call the natural penalties, follow all the same from both. When St. Paul says that, Death reigned from Adam until Moses (that is, even prior to the giving of the law), even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, it is not necessary that he should mean physical death. Suppose we take death to mean in this connection nothing that is mere law of nature but only what is consequence of sin. As a matter of fact, do not the effects of sin reign universally, even over those who are innocent of

it, or who are ignorant of it and therefore are not formally sinful? As I have said elsewhere, I think it would very much lighten up St. Paul's whole teaching and thought if we assumed that generally he does not mean by death the physical change, but only the spiritual quality and consequences which sin has attached to it. What else does he mean when he says that the sting of death is sin. Extract the sting by annulling the sin, and death ceases to be death in the obnoxious sense. It becomes a blissful and blessed change, a birth or an awakening to something higher and better.

Now it is the office of the law to *inform* sin in both ways or senses. It makes sin sinful in the very act of imparting to the sinner the knowledge of its sinfulness. When he knows the law — whether in nature or in himself or in the public conscience or as revealed — and recognizes its sanctions and obligations, then he knows sin as sin and becomes not only materially but formally or really sinful. I say really, because sin as such is not a matter only of the will or the person, but it is of the will or person only in relation to a known and felt standard of being as well as of action. That sin is not imputed when there is no law means both that the one committing it cannot take cognizance of it as sin when there is nothing that reveals it to him as such, and also that God does not regard it as sin in the absence of the knowledge or consciousness that makes it such. But still, to repeat what has been said, the act in itself or in the matter of it is sinful even though it be not the sin of the man, and its effects are

largely the effects of sin, and so it is a fact that sin reigns through death even over those who have not been guilty of sin of their own.

Let us then take with us just so much of St. Paul's simile as we can see and feel the truth of ourselves. There *is* a transgression or a fall of which we may say, if not that the fall of one has been the fall of all, yet certainly the fall of all is as the fall of one. One common spiritual and moral catastrophe involves us all, so that not only without exception do the innocent share with the guilty the actual effects and penalties of sin, but sooner or later all share the sin and the guilt itself. We ought not to carry the simile further than it actually goes, and we need not carry it further than we are able to see that it goes. Neither do I mean to say that in the light of later thought or science the facts and analogies of man's moral condition might not be differently or better expressed. But the thing had to be expressed once for all in a particular time, and it is useless to object that it was viewed and expressed from some of the points of view and through some of the transient aspects of the time.

There are contrasts as well as comparisons between the ways in which we stand related to the act and person of Adam on the one side and those of Christ on the other. It would make our treatment unnecessarily difficult if I should attempt to follow St. Paul through the subtleties and intricacies of one of his obscurest passages. I will give only the conclusions which we can all see to be both true in themselves and

necessary to the Apostle's argument. The great all-inclusive first fact to be brought out by the comparison is this: All that can be compressed and expressed in that one term The Fall of Man is potentially reversed by the more that is meant by the Resurrection or Redemption of Man. By the fall let us understand only what we know to be spiritual matter of fact within our own experience: our universal subjection to the power and penalties of sin; death viewed not as an event and a beneficent event in the necessary order of nature, but as the sting and the curse belonging not to the thing in itself but to what sin has made it, just as what we call the flesh has come to mean not the natural thing pertaining to us as men, but the sin-affected and perverted thing into which the reign of sin in it converts it. Besides these primary features of the fall there are, of course, other vital aspects, but these are the ones which enter most visibly and tangibly into even our sensuous experience. Now just what the fall has been as a general or universal act and fact — the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is in reversal. All that happened to man as Adam or to man in Adam is reversed or undone by what man has done as Christ or by what man has done in Christ. The Resurrection or Redemption means: the power of sin over us destroyed; the entail of death broken; the bondage of sin in the flesh replaced by the freedom of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. This general result of the work of Jesus Christ as the author and representative of human redemption, as Adam stands for the fall, is

more elaborately stated in the double aspect we have been considering.

As the fall was as a single act and our human condition in consequence of it is a single universal fact, so our redemption by Christ and our altered condition in Christ are to be viewed as a single act and fact. The act in Adam brought us into and left us in a state of spiritual, moral, and natural condemnation. Ungodliness and unrighteousness reigned supreme, and the wrath of God was revealed as a just judgment upon them in the self-inflicted penalties they brought upon themselves. The law came in with all its awful sanctions and demands, not with the expectation or the effect of working a cure, but only more and more to reveal and intensify the situation and so to prepare for the one only effectual remedy and help. That remedy came in Jesus Christ, and was manifested and proclaimed as including in Him in all its operation and consequences all who were involved in Adam's fall. As this latter constituted in itself a state of universal condemnation, so its reversal begins with a proclamation and status of universal justification or acquittal, based upon the sole necessary condition of a proper sense of our sin and death in Adam and of our holiness, righteousness, and life in Jesus Christ. The proper sense of the one is repentance and of the other is faith. These two spiritual attitudes, by the grace of God working through them, will of themselves work in us the death to sin and the life to God which is the divine salvation in Christ. But the beginning is an

absolute acceptance with God and an invitation to appropriate to ourselves and to treat as our own all that is Christ's or that is Christ Himself, on the ground that so making it our own in faith and hope will be to make it our own in reality and fact. How it will do so will involve fuller explanation which is only touched upon here, but which will be the subject of the following chapters.

The point touched upon here and to be hereafter further developed is this: Our relation is not merely to the act of Christ but to the person of Christ. Whether or how much that may be the case with Adam also is another matter; we are certainly not now in personal relation with a personal Adam in anything like the same way in which we are so with a living and personal Christ. We might make out a case in order to push the analogy as far as it can be made to go, but surely the Apostle's essential argument does not depend upon any such forcing. There *is*, however, a generic if there is not an individual Adam. We are all in the race, and are what the race is, as an individual. We have participated in all its acts, have shared all its fortunes, and are involved in all its conditions. It is the race with all its history behind it that lives in us in most that we are and acts in us through most that we do. Our relation to Christ is certainly analogous, however far it may be from being identical. We are in Adam naturally and therefore not necessarily personally; we are in Christ spiritually and therefore personally. We share what we are in Adam quite

independently of any consciousness or will on our part in doing so; we can share — *actu* — anything that is Christ or Christ's only through an act of our own of consciousness and will. We must know Christ Himself in order to become what Christ is, it is not necessary to know Adam personally in order to be infallibly all that Adam is. In a word, Christ must needs be to us and in us a living Person; Adam is in us as an impersonal nature. Something of this sort, though just precisely what is hard to define, is contained in St. Paul's distinction: The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The soul is primarily an impersonal principle, although it may as in man become personal. So we speak, at least in Greek, of the vegetable or the animal soul, as well as of the rational or human soul. But the spirit is essentially and necessarily personal.

Christ's act, therefore, of resurrection or redemption, the act by which humanity in His person was freed through freeing itself from sin and was raised in raising itself out of death, — that act could be accounted the act of us all only because of our relation not only to it but to Him. Because we were potentially in Him in His resurrection and redemption, in His human personal attainment of righteousness and life, and because He is in us in our entering into His redemption and resurrection, into the likeness of His death and the power of His resurrection, therefore His initial act could be accounted as our act, even as our final act of perfect oneness with Him will be accounted by us as

His act. The one act of righteousness was imputed to all men for righteousness, because the one man's obedience or righteousness was to make the many men righteous.

The way in which our Lord's obedience is spoken of here and elsewhere brings out the fact that it was as the author and finisher of our own righteousness that He redeemed and saved us, and not by undergoing or performing anything whatsoever in the stead of us or as a mere substitute for us.

XIII

THE CHRISTIAN IN CHRIST

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him by the likeness of His death, we shall be also by the likeness of His resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin; for he that hath died is justified from sin. But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died unto sin once: but the life that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin but alive unto God in Christ Jesus. — ROMANS VI. 1–11.

XIII

THE CHRISTIAN IN CHRIST

Our relation to the act of Christ as our redemption has been practically resolved into our relation to the person of Christ as our actual redeemer. It is He in us, and not merely an act of His once performed for us, that is our real salvation. It is true that in consequence of that act and through our faith in it we are in a status or state of grace which is the condition of salvation; but the condition of salvation is not yet salvation. It is only as the act of Christ becomes not only imputatively our act through faith, but also really our act through participation, that we are actually saved. That Christ died for us is everything to us if it means our dying with Him; it is less than nothing at all to us if His death and ours, He and we, are not, or are not to be, so conjoined. To stop between the What Christ did for us and the What Christ is in us is a fatal halt. The co-crucifixion, co-resurrection, and co-eternal-life, is just the gist of the matter of our salvation. Now how are we to apprehend this conjunction of Christ and ourselves, and — what is the focal point of the relation — how are we so to conjoin His death and resurrection with our own as that He

shall be to us, not only a salvation provided for us as the object of our faith, but a salvation effected in us as the attainment and end of our faith? In order that we may the better realize the meaning of our part not only in Christ Himself but in His distinctive act of death and resurrection, it will be necessary to reflect a little further upon St. Paul's interpretation of our Lord's death and resurrection in themselves first.

The death that He Himself died, what was it? It was, the Apostle replies, a death to sin. Now what would be on our own part, and what was actually on Christ's part, the death to sin? It could not be a mere physical fact; it must be a moral, spiritual, personal act. I will endeavour to analyze and construe that act in terms used by St.Paul himself and by St. Peter after him. St. Peter, we will remember, speaks of Christ's having brought us to God through His own death in the flesh and life in the spirit. Now the more we think of it the more we know that we were not brought to God by the mere fact of Christ's having been put to death in the body and having lived again after the body, or in a resurrection body. But St. Peter himself makes it plain for us by going on to say: Christ then having suffered (or died) in the flesh, do you arm yourself with the same mind. To go no further, it is the mind of our Lord and not merely the bodily expression of its acts or sufferings or achievements that is the main point and the essential thing. Moreover, and what is of more consequence still, the mind of Christ in the matter is that which ought to be

our own, it is the universal right mind of humanity under the conditions in which He is its divine representative. What that right mind is the Apostle goes on further to specify: For he who hath suffered — or, that suffering carried to its limit, hath died — in the flesh hath ceased from sin. Christ has reached that limit of suffering in the flesh or for sin, and humanity in His person has ceased from sin. The thing to be further explicated is the meaning and character of that suffering, and consequently of that death. Jesus Christ was one with us in our nature, our conditions, our temptations, with the sole difference from us of having been sinless in them all; which He could be only through a human victory over sin in them. The sinlessness or holiness of Jesus could no more than ours be a painless experience. Given human nature, human condition, and human temptation, and the possibilities, the solicitations, the deceptions of sin, the toil, the difficulties, the pains of holiness are not to be met and overcome without suffering. The Scriptures do not only directly state that our Lord's immunity from sin was a painful victory over sin, that He was perfected by means of the things He suffered and through successful suffering of the things, — they no less distinctly testify that there was that in Him which He needed to deny, to mortify, to crucify; He had to resist unto blood striving against sin; He had to call as we with strong crying and tears upon Him that was able to save from death, and was heard for His godly faith and fear; He needed to be obedient unto the bitter

limit of death, and that the most painful and shameful death of the cross. More explicitly than in all these details of His human subjection to the human conditions of holiness and life, we have here in the passage now before us the comprehensive statement that Christ's death was the crucifixion of that old man of sin whose death in Him and in us is alike the condition and the very act and fact of all human salvation and life. It will appear impossible to object to the existence of these necessities in our Lord Himself as in all us whose common humanity He shared, when we remember not alone that He did thus share our humanity, but no less that this subjection to outward and inward conditions and circumstances and possibilities of sin are as necessary to the existence of human holiness and righteousness as they are the conditions and causes of human sinfulness and unrighteousness. Just as truly as the universal existence as well as possibility of sin, the strength of its allurement and the power of its hold upon us, is the explanation and account of our human sinfulness, just so truly is it the fact that our Lord's own human subjection to all these circumstances of sin and His triumph in them and over them is the only conceivable and the only possible explanation or account of human holiness. If our holiness must be alone our own victory over our conditions as to sin, as our sin is a yielding to and being subjected by those conditions, then Christ's act, in order to become our act, must have been just the reverse and the reversal of what our own had been: it was a not yielding to or

being subjected by our conditions as to sin, a victory in and over those conditions.

Going then only so far as St. Peter's words, we might say that Christ so suffered in our flesh of sin — the flesh in which we all are sinful — and so suffered for or because of sin in the flesh, as to have overcome and destroyed sin and been Himself sinless in the flesh. The flesh which is called sinful not only because it is the place of the possibility of sin, but because of its actual subjection to sin in all us the rest, was actually without sin in Him because in it He broke that subjection and abolished that sin. He did this, moreover, precisely as we must do it, not by the will of the flesh or by the will of man — not even by the will of His own matchless manhood — but by that grace which is the power of God working in us through faith to the overcoming of sin in the production of holiness. But St. Paul's choice of a word carries us further than St. Peter's. According to the latter, to have died in the flesh, as he means it, is to have ceased from sin. We only conjecture when we undertake to say how much further his meaning goes than simply that of physical death. I have carried it the whole length of a spiritual death to sin in the flesh. St. Paul's language is less open to uncertainty. He says that he who has died is justified from sin. The death which is not merely a cessation from sin but a justification from sin must with much more explicit or expressed necessity be a distinctively spiritual and moral death. The ground and meaning of that ne-

cessity it will be profitable to analyze and endeavour to understand.

It is impossible that we should be justified except for something in ourselves which can be in us a ground of our justification, or at least can justify our justification. The freest justification that even St. Paul can preach is not an absolutely gratuitous one, for it is a justification of us upon the ground of our faith — which means, taking it negatively as well as positively, upon the ground of our repentance and faith. When I say that God cannot do a thing I mean simply that He cannot contradict Himself; He cannot, for example, do what is absurd or immoral. One who is insensible of either sin or holiness is incapable of justification; one who through the law knows what they are but neither hates the one nor loves the other is in the nature of the thing morally unjustifiable, and therefore cannot by God be justified. He who however sinful comes to anything whatever of a sense and hatred of his sin and the beginning of a love and want of holiness can be justified, because he has arrived at the point of becoming, not worthy or deserving, but susceptible of it. Now whether it be the initial justification with which God invests even our beginning of repentance and faith, or invests us prior to these even upon condition of them later; or whether it be the great final justification when God shall recognize all Christ in us and ourselves all in Christ, — one thing from beginning to end is the inseparable condition and ground of our justification, and that is our own personal attitude or

posture towards sin and holiness. From the beginning it must mean and in the end it must be that which in its totality and completion cannot be expressed otherwise than as a death to sin and a new life in and to God. There is the sin and the sinner in every one of us to be resisted unto extinction, to be denied, mortified, crucified. There is, potential if not actual, in every one of us a spirit, a nature, a life of holiness, a personal sonship to God, which needs to be quickened, confirmed, and brought to perfection. There is no justification whatsoever, either possible or promised, which is any more separable than sanctification itself from the express condition of that repentance and faith which mean from the beginning the death to sin and the life to God. The definition of any thing whatever is that which defines it not in its process or progress alone *but* in its end or completeness. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the very definition of justification, because it is not only the human condition of all justification brought to perfection — that is, repentance and faith carried to their limit — but it is the divine investiture of that condition manifested in a realized righteousness and life. He that has realized his own death and resurrection in Jesus Christ, in the true meaning of it for himself, though it be as yet only in faith, is justified in his faith, is as though already dead to sin and alive to God. He that shall realize his own death and resurrection in Jesus, in the fuller and truer sense of having brought it to the actual reality of an accomplished and finished death to sin

and life to God, will know the greater truth and joy of a higher justification; but the merit and the glory of the righteousness in fact will be as much Christ's and not his own as those of the righteousness in faith. In either sense, however, whether in faith only or in fact also, he who has died with Christ, who has died Christ's death, has in the meaning and measure of that act not only ceased naturally from sin but been justified morally and at the bar of eternal justice from his sin.

St. Paul had fully realized the danger, then and always, inseparable from the conception of an objective salvation. If our salvation is complete in Christ, and we are already upon right terms with God upon faith in that, then there is a natural disposition in us to rest in that as though it were all. If we are saved we are saved, and we have only to go on believing that we are saved, and continuing otherwise as we are. The general answer to all such mental fallacies is the insistence upon an obliteration of anything more than a mere logical distinction between a grace of God which is objective to and for us and one which is subjective in and with us. There is no Christ for us really separate or separable from Christ in us. Baptism into His death and resurrection for us is nothing except as it is also and equally baptism into our own dying and rising with Him. We must not conceive of the possibility of any real difference in the things, however it may be possible or even necessary to separate them in thought. The root principle of it all is the fact that

nothing can be really ours, spiritually or personally, that is not *ourselves* not only *potentiâ* but *actu*. Our virtue, righteousness, life, salvation, blessedness, cannot be things without us; they are determined and constituted solely by ourselves and our personal activities. Not my righteousness but Christ's must mean inseparably and identically Christ's and mine. Not I but Christ in me, is really — I only in Christ; for Christ is not another instead of myself, but is only my true, divine, selfhood and self. It is impossible to understand St. Paul without entering into his conception of Christ as our universal spiritual humanity, ourselves in God, as Adam is ourselves in nature. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is of heaven. As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. For that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. As we are one with Adam, and what he is, by fact of nature; so by God's grace, which means through God and His activity in us, are we one with Christ, and what He is, by act of spirit.

The essential matter is of course our relation to Christ in His death and resurrection, but we shall certainly understand this better by considering what Baptism has to do with it. And it may be worth our observation, in passing, that St. Paul makes as little distinction between baptism and the reality it stands for as He does between our righteousness as Christ's and as our own. When Luther made Christianity to consist in the realizing our baptism, it has occurred to

me that his meaning might be, that if we could really take our baptism as *being* actually both for us and in us all that it *means*, we should know and possess for and in ourselves all that Christ is as our righteousness and our salvation. Baptism doth represent unto us our profession, which is — to be made like unto our Saviour Christ; that as He died and rose again for us, so should we who are baptized die from sin and rise again unto righteousness. Baptism does indeed represent unto us our profession, but it does much more than represent, according to St. Paul. It is God's own anointing and endowing us with the grace of that profession; it is our birth from Himself with the Spirit and into the life of that profession; it is consequently a burial with Christ not only into His death but into a fellowship with His dying, and a resurrection with Christ not only into the fact of His life but into the power of His living.

It is surely the least that we can say of the two sacraments of His life ordained by Christ Himself, that they were instituted to be conveyances to us of Himself. This they are to us, to begin with, as expressions to us of what He is to us and what we are in Him; representations to us of our Christian profession. They are the contents of our faith, moulds as it were, into which our faith is to be cast and to be given shape. They are God's specific and distinctive Word to us of Himself in us and ourselves in Him in Christ. But let us remember what a Word of God is. It not only means, but in itself and to faith is, what it means. If the

sacraments are direct Words of God, what they mean they are, and what they are in themselves they ought to be to our faith and to ourselves. It is only the proper response of faith to God's direct Word to say, that baptism not only means but is what it means; that in it we are not only declared but made members of Christ and children of God. It is only a similar language of faith to say, that the Lord's Supper is to us, not only a sign of something, but the thing itself of which it is the sign; that what we offer to God in it and receive from God in it is not a memory or memorial only of Christ, but is Christ Himself alike the object of our faith and the substance of our life. As a word of man cannot do more than represent, a word of God on the contrary cannot do less than be. That which from any one else could not be more than figurative, from God cannot be only figurative. Suppose that all Christians could and would in the truest and best sense simply and sincerely take God at His word; that their faith could take His gifts as being what His word makes them. Suppose that every baptized man should know himself to be, and by the power of God in Him through that knowledge truly undertake to be, one with Christ Himself in all the reality of His divine Sonship, what would be the consequence? Would not all the truth now too much lost to the Christian Church, and so much sought after outside her pale, be at once restored to her? Men want a Gospel which is indeed the power of God unto salvation. They need indeed to know first what salvation means, but that rightly

understood, they have a right to an experience of salvation which will leave them in no doubt that it is from God. Why have they not that assurance in the Church? Is it not because we do not believe God? Not that we do not believe in God, but that professing to believe in Him we do not believe Him. If Christ means anything at all to us as the Word of God, He means God in us as in Him, He means God our own actual righteousness and our own actual life. If Baptism means anything at all to us, it means the oneness of Christ with ourselves and of ourselves with Christ. It means the reality of Christ's death as ours and of ours in Him, the reality of His resurrection as ours and of ours with Him. If it means all this, how much of all this *is* it with us and in us? Why the immense difference and distance between what our Christianity is and what Christianity means? Is not the fault all, not in what God is to us in Christ, but in the response which our faith makes to Him in Christ? Now if we are to begin to take God at His Word — that is to say, to believe in Christ in ourselves and ourselves in Christ — *what* are we to take as the exact content of God's word, as the substance of what is ours to be and to do in Christ? Surely not what any one may individually and of himself conceive Christianity to be, but what our Lord Himself has given and gives in the sacraments as divine conveyances to us of Himself and His life. This is what St. Paul sets us the example of doing. Baptism into Christ not only means to him but is to him that personal incorporation

into Christ which actually makes what is Christ's his own, which is in him too the very power and reality of Christ's death to sin and Christ's resurrection from the dead. Let one make this entire sixth chapter his own, not merely to appreciate the clearness of its theoretical conception of the real and vital relation of the Christian to Christ, but to feel and share its practical sense and actual experience of the living results of that relation in his own quickened and risen self.

XIV

NOT UNDER THE LAW BUT UNDER GRACE

Are ye ignorant, brethren, how that the law hath dominion over a man so long as he liveth? For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die she is discharged from the law of the husband. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress, but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were holden; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter. — ROMANS VII. 1–6.

XIV

NOT UNDER THE LAW BUT UNDER GRACE

Is it possible, and if so, how is it possible for a moral being not to be under the law? How can it be possible for one like ourselves to be released from the natural personal obligation of being his own true, right self? And the law to a man is nothing but the expression to him of that obligation, — of what he ought to be and the moral necessity upon him of being it. There is an additional feature or element in the law; it not only declares to us what we ought to be, and impresses upon us the moral obligation of being it, but it emphasizes the fact that the being it must be our own. It is our own conscious, voluntary, and actual being ourselves that constitutes us persons and that attaches any value or worth to our being such. There is no better place to insist upon this highest and purest conception of law than in the part of the Apostle's argument that lies just before us. Elsewhere and in certain connections St. Paul speaks of the law in lower and more partial senses, as Jewish, ritual, or ceremonial, formal or literal, etc.; but here it is the law pure, essential, and universal. And indeed with St. Paul there is but one

law — the law of God, the law of things, the law of persons. There are many more or less partial aspects, expressions, forms of law — mental, ritual, moral forms — but at bottom or in themselves all these mean one and the same thing, and it is only our misuse or perversions of them that rob them of the deeper understanding and higher respect that properly belong to them. There is no single aspect, or form, or even letter of law that our Lord Himself and St. Paul after him did not reverence, for there is not one which does not in itself mean what all law means — right being, right doing, rightness, righteousness. But here at least, I repeat, we shall see that St. Paul cuts himself loose from all partial forms of law, and has in his mind only the universal, the essential. How then is it possible that we shall be released from the obligation which every moral being cannot but be under to his own law, the law of his own true and right self?

Let us remember that it is that very law — and the more in proportion as it is conceived by us in its highest purity and truth, and in the inviolability of its absolute claim upon us — that is the author of our curse and the minister of our death. It and it alone is the instrument of our judgment, condemnation, sentence, execution. That which in itself, if fulfilled, is the most inherently essential condition and constituent of life, cannot but be, if unfulfilled, the cause and condition of death. And this is the more so the more distinctively the life and death in question are personal, spiritual, moral; that is to say, the more consciously,

freely, feelingly, the law of life or death is but the mode of the self-activity of their subject.

In the illustration which the Apostle is about to give, let us keep in mind that the point to be specially elucidated is, In what sense and in what way may we be released from the natural action, or the natural reaction in ourselves, of our own personal law of righteousness; seeing that that action or reaction is within ourselves sin and all its fatal consequences, spiritual, moral, natural or physical? The duality more or less latent or patent in every moral personality which the argument before us now begins to unfold is neither an invention nor a discovery of St. Paul. It has been in one way or another taken into account by every deepest thinker upon human nature and human life. It exists in us in natural potentiality prior to any fact or experience of sin. So far, therefore, from being sin in itself, it is the ground and condition, as of sin too, so no less of holiness; for it is the ground of the possibility of any personal or moral activity and character in us at all. St. Paul's distinction between the natural and the spiritual man in us is not one in itself of sinfulness or holiness. If there were not the spiritual man we should of course be incapable of holiness, because the spirit is the organ of holiness, or of God in us. But if there were not the natural man we should be incapable of either sin or holiness, for the natural man is the organ of the law, by which alone moral distinctions exist for us at all. The original — not fault but — fact of nature or of what we call the

natural man, what St. John calls the will of the flesh or the will of man, is its deficiency or insufficiency. It is not a sin of the flesh, or of our nature, or of ourselves in the flesh or in our nature alone, that while we can conceive our law, or form ideals of ourselves, we cannot fulfil our law or realize our ideals. It was not intended that our law should of itself be able to make us perfect or our ideals to realize themselves in us. They are intentionally deficient or insufficient in themselves, because they are neither all nor final. One might say, then, that it is a fallacy of the moral consciousness to hold ourselves accountable or to charge ourselves with transgression or sin. But we do do so, and cannot but do so; and so far from any even true theory or conception of the deficiency or insufficiency of our own powers excusing or absolving us to ourselves, the true progress of the spirit is both to deeper experiences of human inability and to higher conceptions and sense of human obligation. If there is paradox in this, it is a paradox which is our dignity and our glory. The Christian explanation is, that our nature is deficient because it is made for the supernatural, to be more than it can become of itself; that our wills are both necessary and insufficient, because while we can be ourselves, or moral, or personal at all, only through our own wills, yet we can be any of these in the truest or highest or best only through something infinitely other and more than our own wills; that, therefore, however paradoxical it may be, the necessity not only of being ourselves but of ourselves so being must,

because it does, coexist and be consistent with the truth of our experienced impotence of ourselves to be ourselves. Let it be paradox, or antimony, or contradiction, or what not, — whatever is essential to the highest actual facts of our freedom, our personality, and our spirituality, or our transcendence of our nature and ourselves through union with God in Christ, that God has made possible, whether or no it is so in itself or we can see it to be so.

Nature, the flesh, ourselves, are ordinarily spoken of by St. Paul as sinful — not, therefore, because they are essentially or in themselves so, but because they are so actually and in us all. It is with us now not only ourselves and God, but our sinful selves and God. But as within every natural man there is a spiritual man, potential or actual; so in every sinner there is a saint, in possibility if not in actuality. And every man, developed up to the point, and not sunk below the point, of spiritual sensation and perception, may be and is more or less conscious of the two men within him — in both stages, of natural and spiritual and of sinful and holy. For as there is no man without the possibility of God in him, so let us hope there is no man without something of the actuality of God in him. The man who is unconscious not only of the coexistence but of the conflict of the two selves within him has not entered upon the reality of human life, for it is just that conflict that gives reality to life. There can be no human life at least that is not a choice, a probation, a decision, a renunciation of one thing for

another, a victory of one thing over another, a life of one thing through the death of another. And the one thing or another is one self or another, one or the other of the two men in each one of us. There are always two masters of whom only one can be served, two lives of which only one can finally live, two men, one or other of whom must die for the sake of the other.

This is so universally and necessarily the case, is so much the very *essentia* of human life, that our Lord Himself was not truly man if He were an exception to the rule. And that He was any such exception is the thing of all things most contradicted by the whole tenour of New Testament record or interpretation of him. He was in express terms the transcendence of the natural in us by the spiritual; the victory of the spirit over the flesh; the reversal of the law and overthrow of the reign of sin and death, through the establishment of the kingdom of God and Heaven, of holiness and life. All such expressions of the human significance of Jesus Christ can be understood only by acceptance of the following principle of interpretation: As it is impossible for any man to know himself except in the light of the divine revelation of him to himself in Christ Jesus, so is it impossible for Jesus Christ to be known by us except in exact terms of ourselves as revealed in Him. To know Christ as the spiritual man must be identical with knowing the meaning and truth of our own spiritual manhood; to know the process or *way* of spiritual manhood in Him, we must know

precisely what we must go through, must suffer and do and become, in order to be spiritual men; what He went through and accomplished in becoming what He is, is in exact terms what humanity needs to go through with and accomplish in becoming like Him. This mutual interpretation of ourselves by Christ and of Christ by ourselves is the simplest key to the understanding of our salvation in Him. When we say that He was that in our common humanity, the being which was its justification, its sanctification, and its glorification, its redemption, completion, and perfection, we have said enough to satisfy all possible conceptions both of His person and His work; and we have at the same time so expressed it in terms of ourselves and in language of our own — ideal but realizable — experience and spiritual possibilities, that He becomes to us the comprehensible truth of our own salvation, because of our actual human life and destiny.

We may proceed now to St. Paul's illustration of the point for which we have been preparing, the crucial question of our possible release from the natural action or operation of our own law. The law, we are reminded, has dominion over a man as long as he lives. How can a man be absolved from his highest obligation, or be divested of his highest characteristic, in the fact of that obligation? How can it cease to be his duty to attain and exercise his highest manhood, or can he be relieved of accountability or responsibility for failing to do so? How can that which reveals to him and calls him to his highest activity and life not

judge and condemn him when he fails to accept the revelation or respond to the call? If obedience and realization and fulfilment by himself of his law is the condition, constituent, and content of life and blessedness for him, how can disobedience, non-realization, and defeat of his law be or be made anything else to him than death and a curse? All these are questions involved in the nature of things and not of mere arbitrary suggestion or solution. How may a man stand both acquitted and released in the presence of his own inviolable and violated law?

The only possible way is the one which begins with a distinct consciousness of the facts as they are. The knowledge of sin is the only beginning of salvation. The knowledge of sin as sin is a moral and not only an intellectual conception; it is an attitude not only of the mind but of the affections and of the will with respect to it; it is a hatred of sin. But there is no such thing or possibility as a mere negative hatred of sin; there can be no hatred of sin that is not a positive and definite love of holiness. The sole and indispensable condition of human salvation lies in the only right attitude possible for man towards the two things that are his personal alternatives, the matters of his moral choice, the determiners of his spiritual destiny, the makers and the make-up of his heaven or his hell. God and Heaven are a Spirit, a Law, a Life; the Devil and Hell cannot be done away with, as at least symbols of an indisputable actuality, — a counter spirit and law, not of life but of death. Now I repeat that the

only right attitude towards sin possible for man in his present condition is that whose beginning is repentance and whose end is the putting away of sin, and that the only possible attitude towards holiness or God is that whose beginning is only faith but whose promise and fulfilment is the "God in us and we in God" of Jesus Christ. How are these beginnings to attain their actual ends in us; how is repentance to be an actual putting away of sin, and faith to be indeed the life and holiness of Christ?

The law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. Only death can release him from it. A woman who is married to a husband is bound by the law of her union and oneness with him as long as the husband is alive. Only the death of the husband could release her from that bond and justify her in uniting herself with another man. In our first or natural manhood we are indissolubly united with and under the law of the natural man. It is only in him, subject to all his conditions, bound by his natural necessities and his moral obligations, that we are men at all or can live human lives. The moral obligation to obey or fulfil our law is the most imperative and inviolable of all the conditions of human life. Obedience to it is in itself life, and violation of it is death. When we say that nothing but death can deliver us from the dominion and operation of that law, it is manifest that the death which can so release us cannot be the simple natural fact of physical dissolution; it therefore devolves upon us to define what that death is. The death of the

first husband is the death in us of the natural man; and the natural man is regarded in his special and highest relation to the moral law. What is that relation, both in what it ought to be, and in what it actually is? Is he living in it, — in the sense in which it not only is said but is true that, He who doeth the law shall live in and by it? If not, then there is but the one alternative, — he must die by it. But, while it is impossible that we shall be saved in the life, or by the obedience of the law, there is a way in which we may be saved by its death, or by the death which it inflicts. Suppose that the law, while it has failed to secure obedience and so to confer life, has nevertheless, in the very act and by the very fact of convincing and convicting us of sin, taught us the meaning and the obligation of holiness; suppose that it has so brought us into the foretaste and experience of sin and its consequences, as to impart at least a suggestion and prevision of holiness with its immunities and rewards; suppose it has gone yet further and has nursed and nurtured in us the sense of need and the ardent longing for holiness and life, — if the law should go no further, will it not have already put us upon the road and created in us the necessary condition of salvation? But suppose it should have gone further, — have gone as far as it can, and have accomplished its perfect work; suppose that under the discipline and experience of the law we shall have been brought to the extremest knowledge of the completest consequences of our condition under the law; the very end of our natural resources and limit of

our natural powers and possibilities; — how then shall we characterize or describe the point we shall have reached? To have come to the end of ourselves and of all potentiality within ourselves; to have made full experiment of our law and of the principle of our own personal obedience to it; to have been tried by it and found wanting, to have sought life by it and found death, — does not this bring us fairly up to that death of the old man, the death in ourselves, which is the one opportunity of divine grace, the one condition of human release and redemption? To have learned the lesson the law was commissioned to teach; to have been brought to the point nature and ourselves were predestined to reach; to have been thus prepared for God's part and our own eternally predetermined activity in Him, this is the way in which the law, not through its life but through its death, has performed its part in bringing us life.

What we mean, then, by the death of the old man, the first husband in us, is this: As long as we were in our old selves, or our own selves, we were under the dominion of a single moral alternative — either to live by our law or to die by it. That is to say, we were under the moral necessity either of realizing, fulfilling ourselves in accordance with the principles and conditions of our moral perfection and blessedness, or else of experiencing the consequences and suffering the penalties of something more and worse than merely having failed in and lost these. For moral failure or loss is something different from mere natural failure

or loss; and its penalties are different. It is a failure that brings with it condemnation and a loss that involves in it guilt. The death of the old man in us consists in part in our full realization of our failure and loss in him; but it consists in yet greater part in our full sense of sin and guilt in him. Fellowship or participation in the death of Jesus Christ, the realization within ourselves of the meaning and reality of His death, is an actual experience of the deadness of ourselves in ourselves alone, in union with mere nature, the old man or Adam, the first husband, the flesh. It is something more, however, than that mere sense of impotency or deadness to the requirements and activities of the real life of the spirit. The impotence or deadness is not of our mere condition, it is of ourselves. Consequently, the death of which we are made conscious in Christ is the death not of mere deadness but the death of sin and sinfulness. The adequate consciousness of that death in ourselves to which we are brought in Christ, the fellowship it gives us in His attitude towards it, is the beginning and the condition of our deliverance from it. The consciousness and sense of being sinful is an experience of the death that sin is; but that very knowledge or experience that sin is death is already such a death in itself for sin as carries in it the death to and from sin. Jesus Christ Himself encountered, came face to face with, experienced, not only all the deadness of humanity in itself, the flesh, for the life that is higher than itself; but all the sin necessarily involved in a life lived only

in it. His human immunity from the sin of the flesh was purchased only by that perfect sense of the sin and death necessarily involved in a life in the flesh, which I have described as being such a death in consequence of as to be a death to and from it. He felt himself in his humanity involved in the sin and death of humanity; He saved Himself from sinning and dying with it by so dying to its sin as to rise out of its death.

That death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was an act not only in humanity but of humanity. If our faith can meet and answer to God's grace; if we can see in the act of Him the act of us, because the act of God in us, — then not only may we, but must we, say that with Him our old selves, the old husband, in union with whom we sinned, is crucified, dead, and buried. It is not only that he has died from us, but we died in him; for in him we have felt and known the full weight of his sin and his death; we have experienced the death for what we were in him, which is the only way to the death to and from what we were in and with him.

As the wife can marry a new husband only if the old husband is dead, and her union with him and life in him have come to a lawful and rightful end, — so we can be in lawful and gracious union with Christ only as we are dead in ourselves, only as in the old self we have known his sin as sin and have suffered his death as death. But if we have truly known the meaning of Christ's death to the flesh or old man of

sin, then indeed are we no longer under the dominion of the law. We are no longer under its condemnation or subject to its penalties; for have we not already in and with Christ endured the one and suffered the other? Have we not already died not only for but to and from our sins, and been raised out of and from our death? We have died in the old man and the old life of the law and of sin and death, and we are alive now in the new man which is Christ and which is holiness and eternal life.

XV

LAW, SIN, AND REDEMPTION

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not lust: but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of lust. The commandment, which was unto life, this I found to be unto death. The law is holy, and the commandment holy and righteous and good. Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shown to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good; — that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I know not: for not what I would, that do I practise; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good. So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not. For the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise. But if what I would not, that I do, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. I find then the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? — I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. — Romans VII. 7–25.

XV

LAW, SIN, AND REDEMPTION

In all St. Paul's writings the passage next before us is the one which gives us most clearly his conception of the law and its operation in human life. As we have said, he uses the term in lower and partial senses and even sometimes with opprobrium; but in the main it is with St. Paul as it is with our Lord; the trouble with the law is not in the law but in us in our relation to the law. The law is not only right and good in itself, it is the very essence of rightness and goodness, or at any rate its identical expression. We can conceive of various kinds of partial good, the goods of outward condition, of the body, of the mind, of the affections, of the will, or of the person or personal activity. Only one of these several forms of good do we dignify with the higher designation of goodness. And in the highest sense only this one, if we listen to even philosophy on the subject, is real good: — there is nothing good but the good will. The good of the will — by which I mean the person, and the properly personal activity and life — is goodness, which manifests itself only in love, service, and sacrifice. On the other hand, goodness is the good of the will, or of the person; it is the only true personal good, the only perfectness

or blessedness of human activity and life. This radical connection of the two words good and goodness is a subconscious indication of the oneness and inseparability of the things. There is nothing in consciousness so egoistic or individual as the sense of that primary thing which we call good, our good or our goods. It is simply that which gives us pleasure, all pleasures from the lowest up to the highest. What else are the goods of outward condition, of the body, of the mind, the heart, the will? How simply and easily the word good passes into the word goodness, and yet what a double chasm yawns between the two things? In the first place goodness is not the further pursuit and attainment of our good, but the voluntary sacrifice and loss of it. It is a passage over from purest egoism to purest altruism, from thought and pursuit of ourselves to thinking of the things and seeking the life of others. And then, in the second place, this goodness reveals and verifies itself as the good will, not only in the sense of the goodness of the will but in that of the good of the will; that is, not only as its rightness or righteousness, but as its truest pleasure, its happiness or blessedness. This is the genesis or evolution not so much of the law itself as of its matter or content.

The law itself might be conceived as having passed through stages something like the following: The law appears first simply as the rule established by experience for securing the most of individual or selfish good. It quickly, however, passes into the larger rule of securing the general or public good against the

invasions and encroachments of the individual. It next manifests itself in the increasing sanctities of the family and social life, in the care and protection of the weak by the strong. Among Greek peoples the law expressed the ideal of social life and order, not only material or physical, but also esthetic and cultural, and to a certain extent ethical or moral. With the Hebrews and the more truly developed religious consciousness and life, the law was the expression of the will and character and purpose of God, revealed in all the workings of things, but manifested more particularly in the life of men as a law of righteousness. With Jesus Christ the law becomes more distinctly spiritual in both origin and nature. It is not only the rule or mode of the divine acting and of all personal acting in union and harmony with it. The law is not a code or a mode, but a spirit and a life. There is all the difference between law and life that there was between the tables of stone and the Spirit of Jesus, or between the prophets commanding, condemning, and announcing death, and the Lord proclaiming liberty and imparting life. Now there is not one of these stages or forms of law that is not legitimate and necessary in its place and order, or that is not taken up and included in the one working of the one only and universal law of God, of persons, and of things. Take, for example, the first and lowest law of our own individual good and egoistic pleasure. The only good as such we can know at all is our own immediate good; if we did not know that, how could we know the good

of another, or of all, or of God? Christianity requires of us to love others *as* we love ourselves, and to do to them as we would have them do to us. It builds all the forms of good as material into the final structure; and does not hesitate to exhibit in that structure not only the highest good as goodness, but equally goodness as the highest good. We must lose ourselves in goodness; but when we have truly done so, then in goodness we find again ourselves in our own highest good. It is not an utterance of sentimentality but the true voice of God and the true ultimate experience of humanity, that the only final good of man is goodness. Christianity is the divine science of life.

That law thus in its supreme and universal sense was in the mind of St. Paul is easy enough to prove in the passage at present before us. The law, he says, which was unto life was found by me to be unto death; its end is life; in itself it is life; but its actual effect upon and in me is death. The law is holy, and the commandment holy, righteous, and good; yet it is the occasion if not the cause in me of sin; but for the law I should not be sinful. The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin; that is to say, in myself or in my flesh I am so little the subject of my true law of holiness and life, that, on the contrary, I am as much subject to the counter-law of sin and death as the slave sold in the market is to the master who has bought him. Even in the flesh, or in our natural condition, we cannot but know our law, in lower or higher if not in the highest meaning or conception of

it. If we do not as yet know it as the spirit and personality of God in us, yet we may know it as the ideal, the truth, beauty, and worth of ourselves. Or, if we do not know it so high as that, we may know it as the rule of the greatest good to ourselves, to others, and to all. In whatever lower or higher form we may know our law, we know that it is only an expression of what we ought to be or do, and not at all of what we actually are. Not at all what we would be are we; on the contrary, we are very much what we would not be. We consent then to the law; we recognize and acknowledge it, admit its claims and confess its authority; more than that, I approve, admire, and desire the law; I may say that I delight in the law — after the inward man, in that true best self which lies at the root of us all; in fact I do actually and at bottom will the law, — who does not? who would not, if he could, be his most perfect self and enjoy his most complete blessedness? — but do I ever fulfil the law? Everything but that — but just the one thing that is the meaning and end and life of the law! And why do I not? The difficulty is in me, in myself, in my flesh; for in mere nature or in my natural condition, and under the law alone, I and my flesh are one; in the old man or the first husband I am nothing but he and know nothing but him. Though with my reason I may apprehend a higher law of him, or of myself in him, and with my will may desire and intend and attempt its realization, yet in my flesh I discover and know full well another law that runs directly counter

to that higher law of the right reason and the true will. This other law or counter-law we have now to consider.

What is sin, and what is the genesis or origin of it in ourselves individually or personally? To begin with, it is in its actual operation certainly not an individual but a collective thing; it is in us as one man, in our solidarity as a race. As in the race so in the individual it is not, in one sense, in us prior to the law; and in another sense it is in us prior to the law. We have explained that by saying, that in the matter or material of it it is in us all prior to any consciousness or knowledge of it, and therefore prior to any personal part in it of our own; but that, since sin is essentially a personal thing, and cannot properly be said to exist outside of the consciousness and the will, that which within these would be sin, without these is not so and cannot be so accounted. St. Paul declared, as we saw, that sin was universal in the world in its ravages and its natural consequences before the law even, in those therefore to whom it could not be imputed as sin, because in them it was antecedent to knowledge or will. How is the case with ourselves now? As it was with the race so is it with the individual, — that there is a stage or state in which ignorance of sin is innocence of sin. St. Paul says of that state, I was alive once; it may have been a very natural and a very joyous life, but it was the life of an animal, or at best of a child, and not that of a man. The plea is sometimes made for primitive or immature races

that they be left in their innocence, or in their ignorance of sin. Not that sins, that are materially such, and such in excess, do not exist among them, but that they are much less dreadful done in ignorance than they would be done consciously and in violation of law. I do not purpose to discuss any such special plea, but how would the principle do as a universal maxim? Would it be better to leave all races and individuals in ignorance and so in innocence of sin?

There is a state, then, before the law; or before that which in any way reveals to us the difference and the opposition between that which we are and that which we ought to be. When that revelation comes, and however else it comes, it comes to us always as a law, — then sin comes to its birth in us; that which was in us before and was not sin, is none the less in us still and is sin. Before, sin was dead, or dormant, and I was alive; now sin is alive and I am dead. Not that I at once realize my condition as death; we speak of things as they are in the end, not as they seem at the beginning. Once having conceived the law, there is no deliverance from its final condemnation and death but in an act of divine redemption and salvation. The law is there alike for us all; it may appear very differently to us severally and individually, but the difference is in us and our apprehensions of it — not in itself and in its claims upon us; and just in proportion as we have been brought by it out of the innocence of mere ignorance, do we see and know that the issues of it with us are the one alternative, life or death.

Was it well for us that sin should thus be born in us? The law came to be — not the cause certainly, but — the occasion of sin; it came, in revealing right, to disclose and expose wrong; in imparting the conception and ideal of holiness, to uncover the meaning and actuality of sin; by showing the way of life, to awaken the consciousness and quicken the sense of death. Everything that belongs to or constitutes human life originates in the moment in which the law reveals itself to the man. If his animal or infantile happiness or life dies in that moment, his reason and his will, as his own and himself, come to birth and begin to live in it. The end of the law is the evolution of selfhood or personality. Formal freedom, choice, decision, accountability or responsibility, the awful task or business of making life and determining destiny, the act of coming of age or attaining manhood and taking into our own hands the questions and issues of true or false, right or wrong, good or bad, happiness or misery, blessedness or curse, life or death, — all these, and how much more, are the creations of the law, are born in us with its first utterance to us, and grow in us with its clearer revelations and higher claims and demands upon us. Nature is good, but the goodness of nature is neither the distinctive goodness nor the proper good of man. His goodness and good come only in his own reaction upon things, and not in their action in or upon him. Those things are best for him which, however difficult or painful or trying, or just because they are so, call out the truest, strongest,

best reactions from himself. Viewing sin as the power against us the most prevalent; the most directly antagonistic to our personality, to our true being and our right acting; the one thing that most inevitably confronts us and affects our nature and destiny; and remembering that as surely as our own sinfulness and death come from yielding to its activity in and upon us, so surely do our holiness and life come in and through or from our meeting, overcoming, and putting it away from us, it may well appear that the law has conferred upon us, not indeed the highest boon — that it is inadequate to bestow — but the next truest benefit, in awakening in us the knowledge of sin. For the knowledge of sin is the condition and the beginning of holiness, as the conquest of sin is certainly for us the only way, if not the very truth and life, of holiness.

The two points with regard to sin upon which St. Paul here dwells are: First, that, when through the law we awake to or come to the consciousness of sin, we find it already existent. It has not as yet been sin in the form of it, but it has already been sin in the matter of it. We have been sinning materially long before we have been doing so formally. That is, we have contradicted the spirit and transgressed the law of true and right being and living, long before the doing so was our own, or the sin of it was our sin. In that sense and to that extent we may say that sin is in us but not of us. When we come into moral being, when our own action begins, and our quality or character is ready to differentiate itself into good or bad, that in

reaction with which it is to do so is ready at hand. We have not to make or to go to find sin. The material of our choice is already with us; we have only to say whether we will make sin our own by accepting it, or by rejecting it make holiness our own. Sin, in a word, is something not ourselves, in relation with which, in reaction with or against which, we ourselves become sinful, or else holy. In contrary ways, through opposite reactions with it, all our spiritual character is determined through our own attitude and activity with regard to sin. This relation to sin, as something through the most vital dealing with which we become ourselves, and yet as something not essentially ourselves, and which therefore in putting away we do not cease to be but rather truly begin to be ourselves, is the condition of the Apostle's conception of redemption.

The other point with regard to sin here dwelt upon is this: That so far from the law of itself putting an end to sin, it aggravates it and makes it more exceeding sinful. Sin, or the sinful thing, committed ignorantly and therefore innocently, is nothing in comparison with the same thing committed knowingly and guiltily. The errors and excesses of mere nature, of animals or children or savages, or of those types of civilization where the mere natural impulses have the maximum of play with the minimum of self-consciousness, are not only comparatively harmless but even tend to balance and moderate and correct themselves. On the contrary, in the communities where there is the

most of moral thoughtfulness and reflection, where reason and conscience and the strong and free will are made the most of, there not only is the exceeding sinfulness of sin the most clearly conceived in thought, the most intensely realized in consciousness, the most thoroughly reprobated by both judgment and sentiment, but there also sin actually exists in its most exceeding sinful manifestations. Where law, not only in its outward sanctions but in its inward real antagonism to sin, most exists, there sin in its worst forms most prevails. Not only this, but the law where most sincerely intended and most earnestly insisted upon has another even more hateful reflex tendency and effect. It tends inevitably to the production and cultivation of hypocrisy. Modern England like ancient Judæa, the home of the moral law and of the moral consciousness, has not been least amenable to the charge of national hypocrisy. Paris may make out a true bill against London for its uglier immorality and less refined sensuality, and worse still for its constitutional hypocrisy, but is the law to be condemed because in its war against sin it makes sin not only theoretically but actually blacker and more sinful? Would it be better, then, to go back from the moral to the natural, to give up the law and take again to the instincts and impulses? At any rate St. Paul's conviction was that the end as the effect of the law was to reveal sin by developing it, to expose it by showing it, and to prepare the way for its extinction by making it offensive to the consciousness and exhibiting it in

its true nature and consequences in knowledge and experience.

What, then, in one word of anticipation of fuller treatment, is redemption? It is, first, to know what sin is, and to feel it for what it is. It is to know that sin and death and hell are all synonymous terms. It is to realize with St. Paul, in the second place, that sin is a separate and a separable thing from ourselves. Though it is in us it is not of us, except in so far as we ourselves make it our own by taking it into ourselves. And as it is ours only by our taking it into ourselves, so it may be made not ours through our putting it out of ourselves. In the third place, we may of ourselves go so far at least as this: Of the two men within us, with which one shall we identify ourselves? St. Paul recognized as we may an inner man within himself who was unequivocally on the side of the law and against sin. It is true that he confessed also to an outer man, of whom he says — or rather, in whom he says of himself: The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. Now the vital point with St. Paul was, Which of those two men was *he*? It is a question with each one of us, and a question in which, above all others, the deadly issue between reality and hypocrisy depends upon the sincerity and the thor-

oughness with which we decide it. For even under the law a man, though he be unable to separate or divorce himself from his sin, can set himself against it. This is what St. Paul does. He deliberately and determinedly disclaims and disowns the sinful self in him, and identifies himself and takes his stand with that other self which delights in the law and repudiates the deeds of the flesh. That which I do I know not; I was doing it before I knew, and I do it now not with but against my will; for not what I would that do I, but what I hate that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, then I consent unto the law that it is good; and then it is not I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. In my divided self, the true, real I is in and with the self that hates, not in that which lusts after and does sin. If I cannot wholly separate myself in act or fact from the flesh of sin, I can at least repudiate and disclaim it as being the real self of my love or will or meaning. If I cannot effect a divorce from the first husband *a vinculo*, I can at least do so *a mensa et toro*. This is as far as St. Paul could go under the law, but he could and would go so far; and so far is a very important step towards our going farther. For the divorce *a vinculo* from the old man and from under the law is impossible for God without myself. We cannot too much insist that God cannot put away sin from a man who does not put away sin from himself. With the soul its marriages and divorces are nothing if not its own acts. And there is a divorce for the soul, but it is only through death; only in the

death of that from which it is divorced, only in its own death in that from which it is divorced.

Blessed be God through Jesus Christ our Lord! There is a divorce *a vinculo* from the body of this death, — from sin, because from our old selves of sin. In Jesus Christ not only is there a death for and from sin, but there is a death for us for and from sin. Through Him we have been enabled to know and feel sin for what it is — *so* to know and feel it for what it is, as, in knowing the death it is, to enter into the fellowship of Christ's death and to know the power and reality of His resurrection.

XVI

THE CONDEMNATION OF SIN IN THE FLESH

What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin (or, as an offering for sin), condemned sin in the flesh: that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. — ROMANS VIII. 3, 4.

XVI

THE CONDEMNATION OF SIN IN THE FLESH

THERE is, first, the simple fact of our Redemption. In Christ Jesus we are no longer under the condemnation of sin; and because we are no longer under its condemnation, therefore also we are no longer under its power and dominion. In our faith we see ourselves as God in His grace sees us. It is the function and measure of faith to answer to the divine grace, as the reflection in the mirror answers to the object before it. It is our Christianity to see ourselves in Christ. But we must see Him, if we would see ourselves in Him; as *per contra* we must see ourselves in Him, if we would see Him. We must see Christ and ourselves mutually and identically dead for and from sin, and alive to and with God. Grace and faith must realize themselves each in the other, and become one in the act, as God and man are one in Christ.

Before we enter into the subject of our redemption in Christ we must first review the subject of Christ's redemption of us, and endeavour to bring to a head all that has been previously said on the subject. We may do that in a careful study of a passage immediately

before us, and some kindred passages. What the law could not do, says the Apostle, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. What could the law not do? The absolutely only thing that it could do was to condemn us and to subject us to the penalties inherent in and inseparable from its transgression. It could neither not do this, nor do anything else. This is not an arbitrary fiat but a necessary fact. To make sin not death, if holiness is life, or to intervene between the sin and the death which it is, is no less a natural impossibility than a spiritual contradiction.

What the law could not do it could not do because of the inherent weakness of the flesh, or man in himself, to obey the law, to achieve the righteousness which is the necessary requirement of the law. The law is unable to present man righteous, or to justify him before God, because it is unable to bring or to make him righteous. If it cannot present him righteous or justify him, it can only present him unrighteous or condemn him.

What the law could not do, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin, condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement, or the righteousness, of the law might be fulfilled in us. There are here several very great questions, not all of which are to be considered quite yet. Greatest of all

is the christological question of what or whom we mean by His own Son. Next greatest is what we understand by God's sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin. The second we will consider now and leave the first for separate and fuller discussion. For the present let us assume the highest (which I believe to be also the truest) sense in which we can take the words in question, God's own Son. We have then to inquire into the meaning of our Lord's having come in the likeness of sinful flesh, or of the flesh of sin. From the longest and most careful reflection upon the language and the matter of the New Testament, I am unable to accept the words as containing in themselves the implication that our Lord came into a nature or condition which was *like* but was *not* the flesh of sin. I feel the theological or doctrinal difficulty, but I also feel that that, and that alone, is the reason or excuse for modifying the meaning of words which are nowhere else so modified. I should much rather meet the real difficulty some other way; or, if I cannot fairly do so, then face it squarely. Like and likeness in the New Testament do not mean "like but different"; they mean like in the sense of identical. When our Lord was made, or became, in the likeness of men, He did not become something similar to but not the same as man; He became *man*. When He was tempted in all points like as we are, His temptations were not in some points only and not in others like our own; they were essentially and identically our own, with the sole additional circumstance, which does not affect

the nature or character of the temptations, that whereas all we are overcome by them, He overcame them. And, humanly speaking, that is all the difference between sin and holiness. Sin or holiness cannot be in mere nature or condition; they can be only in what *we* are or do in the nature or the condition. In the identical nature and condition in which all we the rest without exception are sinners, because sin through the nature or condition overcomes and enslaves us, in that precise nature and condition, with no further difference than this, Jesus Christ overcame sin and in doing so redeemed our nature from it and its consequences. His own utter and absolute sinlessness or holiness was just the essence of all Christianity, but that sinlessness, I can never tire of repeating, was no mere fact of His nature, human or divine, it was His work in our nature, the work of our salvation. And that it might be a work in our nature, it was necessary it should be our nature, precisely as it is, in which the work was done. When we call the flesh sinful, or speak of it as the flesh of sin, we do not mean that *it* is sinful, but only that it is that through which *we* are sinful. The flesh was only not sinful in Jesus because He was not sinful in it. His holiness in the flesh was the destruction of sin in the flesh. At the same time He Himself was holy in the flesh only by not being in the flesh; that is to say, by dying in it and to it, and living in and to God. This is the critical and crucial act in Him which requires fuller explanation, at the same time that it will always defy or transcend full understanding.

Our Lord is said to have come not only in the likeness of the flesh of sin but also *for* or *about* sin. The well-known elliptical Greek expression is legitimately expanded into *as an offering*, or *sacrifice, for sin*, but the meaning of it need not be limited to that. Jesus Christ was indeed, in the most perfect sense, an offering or sacrifice for sin; but in a yet wider sense it is right to say that His whole business or work in the world had to do with sin, was concerning or about sin. This is so only because the life of man in the world is mainly if not wholly concerned about sin, is mainly if not wholly determined by his attitude or relation to sin. A man *is* only what he personally accomplishes and becomes; and his accomplishment and becoming consist in and are measured by what he overcomes. For us at least, whatever of positive or actual holiness there is in us is negatively so much sin met and surmounted. It is not with us that holiness comes first, as a fact or matter of nature, and then sin ensues as a falling away from that; but, on the contrary, the matter at least of sin first presents itself to us and with us, and holiness originates and consists in the resisting, denying, mortifying, and finally crucifying it in ourselves, — and, so far as it has become part of ourselves, ourselves in it. Whether we make real manhood to consist in virtue, or the fulfilling of the law of nature; or in righteousness, or the fulfilling of the law of God; or in holiness, or sharing the personal spirit and nature and life of God; — in any case the positive quality which distinguishes and constitutes manhood is acquired

in overcoming its opposite, and is not itself antecedent to and independent of its opposite. Jesus Christ came into the world, Jesus Christ is in the world, to accomplish the work of the world, which is the task of humanity. The Father's business which He must needs be about is the business that concerns us all, the business of becoming ourselves through performing our parts under the actual conditions of human life. With Him as with us the most characteristic and distinctive condition of human life was temptation, probation, trial; and this comes, or can come, only through the varied assaults of the various forms of evil, natural, moral, and above all spiritual evil, or sin. It is rational, then, and true to say that Jesus Christ was sent into the world, and that His business here was, *about sin.* As St. John expresses it, He was manifested that He might take away sin. And this He did, — first, by the divine grace in Himself to overcome and destroy sin in our nature; and then by imparting to us the selfsame divine grace to die with Him to sin and live with Him to God.

I have said that our Lord's own death to sin could only in a very secondary sense have been the mere natural removal from it by physical death. It must have consisted essentially in a spiritual attitude and act in which sin was met, overcome, and extinguished by its spiritual opposite. It is scarcely enough to say that the spiritual opposite is holiness, without saying what holiness is. It is the distinctively spiritual quality or character, what we are in and through a right per-

sonal relation with God. In this world the states and activities of that right relation are Faith, through which God is what He is to us; Hope, through which we are what we are in God; and Love, which is what God is to and in us and what we are in Him. But if faith, hope, and love are the activities of the spirit which constitute holiness, righteousness, and life, what are the spiritual opposites of faith, hope, and love? And how can faith, hope, and love prosper and triumph save over these opposites? Our Lord's triumph over sin and death was a victory of the essential attributes and attitudes and activities of the spirit as manifested in human life and under human conditions. It was the perfection of human faith, human hope, and human love; it was the complete realization of the spirit and nature and life of God in us.

This, however, does not yet sound the depths of the meaning of our Lord's personal death to sin, and we must venture to extend a little further our explorations into the sacred circle of that most holy experience. If there has been any consistent principle or philosophy in the method of interpretation which we have been pursuing, it must be found in the following particulars: The whole work of Jesus Christ in humanity must be expressible, whether or no we may succeed in expressing it, in terms of distinctively human activity and experience, human effort and attainment, human predestination and realization. Jesus Christ accomplished and became precisely what it was the proper and predestined task of humanity in Him to accomplish

and become. This is not to say that the work of Christ is not equally expressible in terms of the divine activity. Jesus Christ means to us, What God is, and has done, and is doing in humanity. God was and is in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, imparting Himself to us and taking us up into participation with Himself. But God is in us only what we are in Him; and God does in us only what we do in Him; and what that is, must be as perfectly expressible in terms of us as of Him. That is all the mystery or the truth of Jesus Christ; He is perfect God in man only as He is perfect man in God. His atonement was God's at-one-ing Himself with man in and through the responsive act of man at-one-ing himself with God; God's putting away our sin in us is accomplished only through our putting away our sin in God. What He does He does in our doing, and what we do we do through His doing in us. God nowhere and nohow manifests Himself save in what things or persons are in and through Him. He manifests Himself so in natural creation, and equally only so in spiritual creation. God is naturally in us immanentally or in ourselves; He is spiritually in us transcendentally or in Christ; in either case, He is in us *as*, and in the way and degree in which, we are in Him. In Jesus Christ God is perfectly in man and man perfectly in God, each because the other.

In describing our Lord's attitude and activity, His business in the world with regard to sin, we must follow the above principle of interpretation. We must

try to conceive of it as man's or humanity's proper business, right attitude and action, with regard to sin. As our representative, as absolutely one with us and like us in all our nature and in all our condition, He as God has done in us and He as man has done in God that which would constitute in us and does constitute in Him our salvation, — precisely as we should have to do it, and should do it, in working out our own salvation. Let us follow ourselves then, as far as we can, in Him, and see ourselves in the act and process of our own salvation. Jesus Christ then — describing Him in terms of ourselves — knew all the limitations of our nature; He knew better than we, because He tried its powers more faithfully than we, its inability to go or reach beyond itself. He knew that we are but dust, that that which is born of the flesh is flesh and can be nothing more than flesh. He experienced to the limit the impotence of the human will, the will of man, to attain the ends and accomplish the requirements of manhood. He uttered the universal experience and voice of humanity when He said, I can of myself do nothing. More and further than that, — we must not begin here or at any future point to make our Lord's human experience essentially different from our own, or in any respect different except in the fact that He was humanly enabled to transcend our human inability and overcome the sin that overcomes us. But how did He overcome it? Only on the line of our own only possible overcoming it, the way which God's love and grace and fellowship have made possible for

us in Him. Jesus Christ not only knew our nature and its natural limitations; He not only knew in Himself our inabilities and insufficiencies in ourselves; He knew in Himself too our universal actual condition as regards sin. In taking upon Himself not only our nature but our nature in its actual condition, He took upon Him its universal actual condition of subjection to sin and death. He knew in Himself that the humanity in which He took part, which He shared with all us the rest, was under the actual curse of sin and death. By no mere fiction of imputing or reckoning or accounting, but in most blessed actuality and fact, He took our sin, our curse, our death, upon Him. *As man* our Lord was subject with us all to sin and death, and as man He could no more have saved Himself from sin and death than we can. As man, God sent Him and He came into the world to reveal and impart to us a divine salvation in which like Him as man we as men might be saved. Jesus Christ was not saved by any difference of nature from ours; nor from any difference of actual condition from ours. He was saved to the uttermost by knowing to the uttermost wherein His salvation lay — not in His nature, not in Himself, but in God; not in the power of a human obedience to the law, but in the power of a divine grace in Him, working through faith, through hope, and in love. Jesus Christ knew in Himself, as in all the humanity with which He made Himself one, that what we call the flesh, human nature by actual condition, was sinful — in the sense, and only in the sense,

that it was unable in and of itself to be otherwise than sinful. More exactly, it was sinful in the sense that no one *in the flesh*, not even He, could be sinless. No one more than Jesus experienced and felt the fact that for the flesh that was in Himself there was nothing to be done but resist, deny, mortify, crucify it — to die in it and so from it. It was our own old man, the flesh of sin, the whole body of sin, with all its curse upon it, that He took upon Himself, and put off and abolished for us all by His death under and from it.

Let us come back to the words of the text of this chapter, and close with a brief exegesis of them. God sent His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin. That means identically, no more and no less, what is meant elsewhere by our Lord's being made, or becoming, in the likeness of men. St. Paul says again: Him who knew no sin God made to be sin for us, or in our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. Either before or in the flesh our Lord knew no sin. But in the flesh He entered into that relation, of nature and condition, to sin in which He found the flesh. He took upon Him in it its subjection to sin, its curse, its death. I say *its* subjection: — that does not mean or involve or imply *His* subjection. On the contrary, His taking was the breaking of that subjection; in the flesh of our sinfulness He was sinless. — How so? Jesus Christ had come *for* or *about* sin, and as an offering or sacrifice for sin. That which He offered up in sacrifice to God, that which He carried back with Him to God from His divine mission

to men, was humanity in His person dead in its old self and dead to its old self in the flesh, and alive to God in the spirit. In that act God condemned sin in the flesh, but He condemned it how? By bringing humanity itself to condemn it in itself, by bringing humanity to die in itself to itself, and to live in and to Him. It was the woman's seed, after all, that bruised the serpent's head. It was humanity in Christ that condemned and abolished sin. Our Lord took our flesh of sin only that in it He might accomplish that death to sin which is our own and only salvation from sin. And so the Apostle goes on to say: He condemned sin in the flesh, *in order that* the righteous requirement, or the righteousness, of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh (in which we are now dead), but after the spirit (in which we are now alive).

XVII

THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT

There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death. — ROMANS VIII. 1, 2.

XVII

THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT

From this point on we may be occupied with the more positive and detailed construction of that life in Christ which, according to St. Paul, constitutes, or is, human salvation. There is but one truth of the being in Christ, but there are stages or degrees in the realization or actualization of that truth. There is an objective being in Christ even prior to faith, which is indeed the condition and content of faith; for how shall we realize or actualize by faith our being in Christ, unless our being in Christ is already a fact to be so realized? Faith does not create a fact, it only accepts one; the effecting or creative cause in our salvation is in God's act, which comes first and consists in His placing us in Christ for salvation. Our act of faith is only the apprehending or realizing cause, and could not take place at all if there were not already in God's act the thing to be apprehended and realized. In the truest sense of distinctively Christian faith, Baptism may be said to properly precede Faith; just as in every case the act of adoption, or the active adopting, is prior to the passive or acceptive being adopted. The act and truth of Christian Baptism furnishes from God the

matter or content of Christian Faith, whose sole function is to realize, to make actual or real, our baptism.

Not only is there a being in Christ prior even to our faith, which faith does not effect but only accepts, but even in the very first act of faith, or of spiritual apprehension and appropriation on our part, there is already the beginning of a subjective real, or realized, being in Christ, which, as St. Paul holds, is the earnest and pledge to us of our complete real being in Him. But these earlier stages of being in Christ will themselves be better understood if we follow our principle of defining the thing at once by what it is not in its progress but in its completion. The complete being in Christ means the complete being of Christ in us. The branch is completely in the vine only when the life of the vine is completely in the branch. The life of Christ, or the life in Christ, is best understood in its perfection in Christ Himself, or in us conceived as complete in Him.

In Christ Himself, then, or in ourselves as we shall be complete in Him, we come to study the law of spiritual manhood. St. Paul calls it The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. He might equally well have said The law of the life of the spirit in Christ Jesus. There may be this difference: The law of the Spirit of life, or The law of the life-giving Spirit, emphasizes the universality and the divine personality of the One source and substance of all life, the Spirit of God; whereas when we speak of The law of the life of the spirit — especially as, in the case of ourselves,

involving a contrast with the life of the flesh — we mean more immediately and emphatically the spirit as our own. But what is our own spirit but the organ of the universal or divine Spirit in us; and what is the law of that life-giving Spirit in us but the law of the life of our own spirit in Him?

By the law of a thing we mean the mode of the thing's own proper operation or activity, — how it acts or operates when it is true to itself, or to its appointed nature and function. The true activity or function of the spirit is spiritual life. We cannot define ontologically the *what* of the spirit or of spiritual life, any more than we can define that of natural life. What we can do, and all that we need to do, in both cases, is to define the mode or law of their actual or phenomenal action; that is to say, we can determine and express the particular activities in which life spiritual, as well as life natural, normally and properly manifests itself, and in doing so we are stating its law. The law of the Spirit of life, then, as it is revealed in actual operation in Christ, or as it is manifested in an accomplished human salvation, is the exact and actual form or mode of God's activity in us in making us spiritual men. Or, putting it the other way, the law of the life of the spirit in us, as manifested in our salvation in Christ, is the form or forms which our spirituality assumes in union with Christ and in the actual process of our salvation in Him. We are dealing thus only with the observable phenomena of spiritual life; as to the essential matter or substance of the life of the

spirit, I have only to say, that as it is the life of the Spirit of God in us, so we only know that it is the life of our spirit in God. The life of God as a Spirit is communicable to all beings who, by virtue of spirituality in themselves, are capable of relationship or participation with His spiritual nature or personal disposition and character.

I am more and more convinced that St. Paul gives an exhaustive as well as exact inventory of the proper activities or functions of the human spirit under the familiar terms, Faith, Hope, and Love. A perfect faith would perfectly relate man to God, and the life of man to the life of God, as the objective perfect cause of all perfection in himself. A perfect hope would furnish the necessary subjective condition of man's adequate or complete self-comprehension and self-realization in God. A perfect love would contribute all the substance, or matter, or content of the entire life of God in man, and the entire life of man in God. The perfection of God in man, which is the object of faith; the perfection of man in God, which is the object of hope; and, in the third place, not alone the perfect being of God Himself in man, or of man himself in God, — but, by consequence of that, the perfection in man of that which is most essentially God, and the realization in God of all that is most distinctively man, which is the divine principle and ultimate reality of love or goodness, — what outside of or more than this can constitute or dignify or bless the true life of the spirit of man!

What has been said thus succinctly, and somewhat mystically, of faith, hope, and love, as comprehending all the proper functions or activities of the life of the spirit of man here upon earth, is capable of being said not only more in practical detail but in more scientific form and in terms of more common experience. And first with regard to the principle of Faith: There is no disposition in general to underrate the part and power of faith in the business of life. In one sense or another, under one form or another, all of us recognize and admit that the pith of enterprise and success in action comes from the faith with which we act. Giving it at once the widest application, he who has the most faith in things as they are in the world is in the condition and attitude to make the most of, and to derive the most from, things as they are in the world. In the application of this practical principle we are disposed to emphasize one side of it to the extent of saying that, for the effectiveness of life, it is a secondary matter what we believe; the point is, how we believe it. But, when again we look at the matter in its largest view, no one surely will deny that it is more effective for life to have faith in the true ends, or end, of life than to have never so complete a faith in those ends that are false and delusive. And surely, too, to have a perfect faith in and to work with things as they are in the world, as they are in reality friendly and assistant to the true ends of life, differs by the whole heavens from taking and using them, with all possible conviction, as they are not. I conceive the function of faith

to be, to bring the personality of man — his mind, affections, and will, and so his life — into understanding, sympathizing, and co-operating attitude and relation with the truth and beauty and goodness of things as they are. I think we should cease from trying to prove the unprovable, and take to knowing the entirely knowable fact that the universe in which we are is a personal universe. The realities of it are not the mere elements or rudiments of matter and mechanism, but the highest activities of spirit and life. Like everything else, the universe itself is to be defined by itself at its highest and not at its lowest, not by its lowest constituent elements but by its highest constituted whole of divinest worth and value. The ultimate reality of things as they are is the highest good of the spirit, which is identical with the highest spiritual good of goodness, or love.

Now, then, let us look at the distinctively Christian faith as it is portrayed for us in this great eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. We are brought in the faith of Jesus Christ into the most complete not only understanding but unity with the entire working of all things as they are in the world. We see the meaning, purpose, and glorious end of things; the painful but necessary and salutary process of things; the seeming and superficial enmity but deeper and real friendship of the things of life for all who understand; the actual working together for good of all things to those who enter into the divine purpose and unite themselves with the divine co-operation; the already assured more than

victory for those who, however deeply and darkly involved for the present in things as they are, yet know themselves to be one and at one with the spirit and reason and issue of things as they are. Quite apart from the question of the objective correspondence of reality with the contents of such a subjective faith, one must feel the advantage and power of such a feeling, if not knowing, ourselves upon such terms of amity with the world with which we have all to do. Such a faith in itself, apart from its warrant in fact, is assuredly the best equipment for doing the most in the world and making the most out of it. But how would the power and advantage be multiplied by the addition, that the subjective conviction of faith is, in the spiritual order of the world, the ordinary and necessary means and condition of the personal acting in it of a world or kingdom of actual objective spiritual reality and fact! More important to us than even the power and advantage that comes from faith in the truth of things, is that which comes from the truth and reality and actual operation in us of the things of faith.

As to the question of the objective validity in fact of the subjective contents of faith, I can only repeat words already used: for the things of the spirit we need a more distinct and separate method of their own. The things of sense experience are all without us and need to be brought and proved *to* us in order to be known. If we make the kingdom of God similarly an order without us, like that of nature, then similarly, too, it will depend upon proofs or verifications *to* us

of the same kind. But the kingdom of God is made up altogether of what we ourselves are; not of what things are to us or in their action upon us, but of what we are to things and in our reaction with them. It is the kingdom of our own attitude towards and relations with our world of environment. The revelation of God in Christ is not designed to add anything to our natural or scientific knowledge. It is a revelation of nothing *to* man, but of everything *in* man. We see all God, all truth, all beauty, all good and goodness, *in Him, in man* — and that is all we see. No more in Jesus Christ than in us is God visible otherwise than within Him, in the quality and character of His visible manhood and consummate personality. These things of the life of the spirit itself can never be proved *to* the spirit; they can only be proved *in* it. They cannot be known by proofs; they can be proved only by knowing. When our Lord says to us, I speak that I do know and testify that I have seen; or when St. John after Him says, What we have ourselves seen and known of the Word of life that declare we unto you, here is the testimony of spirit to spirit of the supreme reality of things which are true only in the kingdom or world of spirit. Knowing beyond all peradventure and with the only immediate certainty possible for man — the certainty of his own interior personality — the essential things of the spirit, we may infer and deduce connections of it with the things of external and natural fact, — but the moment we do so we must, in the sphere of the natural, submit ourselves

loyally to the principles and laws and tests of natural knowledge. If the spiritual man is sole judge in things exclusively of the spirit, so in the realm of natural fact around us there must be no spiritual interference with the autonomy of natural observation and conclusion.

Let us sum up the true spiritual contents of our faith in Christ. First, there is the unqualified truth of the perfect being of God in man, — not an immanental being in him which is as true of one man as another and as true of things as of men, but a transcendental being in him, realized first in Christ and through Him to be realized in us, a being in us in union of persons and not mere relatedness of nature. This is the primary truth of the kingdom of God within us, and it is as verifiable by us from within as it is unprovable or undisprovable to us from without. The Life that was manifested to the world in Jesus Christ is a life in which we are called to share, and just in proportion as we do share it, as we approximate to His own perfect participation in it, can we too say like Him, I speak that I do know and testify that I have seen.

The second truth of our faith in Christ is the revelation and realization we have in him of ourselves in God. Christianity reveals God not merely as love, but in the highest personal form of love, as universal and perfect Father. As the supreme perfection and blessedness of God consists in what He is, in the unsurpassable limit of His divine selfhood or personality, so the supreme activity of God in the world which He has

made not Himself is that of His divine Self-communication. To *other* Himself in others than Himself, that is the highest work, the divinest act of love, of which even God Himself, or Love itself, is capable. So Christianity, without ever adequately saying or knowing why, yet forever reiterates and insists, that God in the Godhead itself is essentially and eternally Father, and in the Kosmos, in all the infinite creation, is everywhere Father, and in the nature and destinature of man is at last and forever to be known and crowned Father. Fatherhood is love concrete and eternal in God Himself. It is love ἐνδιάθετος — love inherent and essential in the divine nature and action. Sonship is love προφόρικός — self-reproduced, no longer in itself but in another, — the other, a veritable other-self, with whom it is one not in a numerical, natural unity, but a new, personal and spiritual unity. The eternal Sonship which is divine in Christ becomes human through Him. It extends and imparts itself to embrace and include humanity, and in humanity the whole creation of which it is the head and end. To know ourselves in Christ, then, and in Christ to know ourselves sons of God and heirs of His own eternal life, is indeed to know ourselves with a knowledge that transcends all human science and of which faith is the only possible human vehicle or expression. The difference between fatherhood and sonship is extended into that between love and grace; sonship is the father *in* the son, grace is love in its object — what we might call *applied* love, love in energy or actuality. We

speak, therefore, of the love of the Father and the grace of the Son, the one standing for what God is to us, the other for what God is in us. The one is love in itself, in its source or origin, the eternal divine disposition toward us; the other is love with us, in act, in divine operation within us.

As the first two truths of our faith in Christ might be called simply those of the Father and the Son, so the third may be designated that of the Spirit. Or, to put it in the other way, as the first two may be called those of the divine love and the divine grace, so the third may be named that of the divine *koinonia*. This word is not adequately represented by communion or fellowship. St. Paul objects to the word *mediator* in the phraseology of Christianity, because a mediator is not of one but of two; whereas God and man are not two but one in Christ, and there is nothing, not even a mediator, between them. So I object to the words communion and fellowship simply as not going all the way of that unity of God and man in Christ which is the truth of the Holy Ghost. The truth of the Spirit of God is the truth of the spirit of man. The *koinonia* is not real or complete so long as the spirits are two and not one. We have it in its completeness only as the eternal, personal Spirit of God is the actual personal spirit of the man. We have it at all, in its beginnings and growth, only to the extent to which the Spirit of God has become our own spirit. God is indeed in the truest sense with us; but without us or within us no man hath seen or can see God

otherwise than in what God is in himself and as himself — that is, in what he himself is and the spirit he is of in God. The truths of faith, then, are these three: the truth of God Himself in us, the truth of ourselves in God, and the truth of the perfected not merely external relation but internal unity or oneness of God and ourselves.

Having given so much attention to the principle of faith as the first great function of the spirit, we may deal more briefly with the other two. I make the great point of distinguishing the action and part of hope from those of faith because the meaning of the one has been too much lost in the overshadowing light of the other. Faith has to do with the infinite not-ourselves or about-ourselves that is without us; hope is properly concerned about ourselves. It is a just charge against Christianity that it has been made too much a doing for humanity from without, and too little the doing of humanity from within. It is a waiting upon other powers to take the place of our own and determine our nature and destiny, if not independently of ourselves, yet with only a negative and passive part in it of our own. Nothing is more necessary for our Christianity than to make it clear to us that there is no such thing as a grace for, which is not also a grace in, us; that God works in us to will and to do in the matter of our salvation not in mere co-operation but only in actual identity with our own working out every jot and tittle of our own salvation, through His grace working not merely with but in us. As faith is not

enough in itself or alone, and apart from the objective reality of its objects, so hope is a real power only in conjunction with the inherent and essential truth of its object. The only proper object and end of Christian hope is what we ourselves may be and do and become in Christ, that is to say, in God. We do indeed discard or lose ourselves in and for God in Christ, but it is only to re-find ourselves in all God is in us and we in consequence are in Him. Christianity does indeed say, with Christ Himself, I can do nothing of myself, — but only to add, *Because* not of myself, because of God in me, therefore I can be all things and do all things and endure and overcome and become all things. It is a right and a great thing, as to believe that God is all things to and for us, so to hope that in response we can be all things to and for God. We do not in Christianity reduce our hopes and desires to zero for their vanity and futility; rather, for the glory and the certainty of them, do we raise them to infinity in Christ. We enter upon a career which means in the end that is assured to us — perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect. St. Paul says: If God be for us, — there is his faith; if God is for us, all is for us, and all things are in reality, no matter what the appearance, working together for our good. What then? Why, if God is for us then what can be against us? What can separate us from Him or defeat us in Him? In all that can possibly befall us we are already more than conquerors through Him that loved us. There is his hope — a hope assuredly not in all things done

only for him, but equally in all things to be done in him and by him.

The permanent, essential, and eternal function of the spirit is of course that to which faith and hope are but the entrance and introduction. To know God in ourselves, to know ourselves in God, is but the beginning of knowing *what* God is in Himself and us. Unhappily there is here again a practical divorce — not indeed between the knowing and loving God and the knowing and loving what God is, because that were impossible, but — between very much supposed knowledge and love of God, and any real knowledge and love of what He is. Is it not something more than a theoretical inquiry — a serious question indeed of practical fact and import — which of two men is more personally acceptable with God, the man who not having faith in God as a Person, nor knowledge of the hope set before us in Christ, nevertheless sincerely loves the Thing that God is and gives himself to it, or the man who, devoted to the Person of God, and zealous in His cause, does not love nor live the Thing that alone God is and that alone is God either in Himself or in us? Surely it is neither amiss nor unnecessary to insist, as St. Paul for Christ and Christianity so much insists, that not a true faith in the truth of God, nor a true hope in the truth of ourselves, is after all the ultimate thing and function of the spirit, but that reality alone which *is* the truth of God and of ourselves.

XVIII

THE MIND OF THE SPIRIT

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace: because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be: and they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. — ROMANS VIII. 5–9.

XVIII

THE MIND OF THE SPIRIT

WHAT has been said of the law of the spirit's activity, both as the law of the divine Spirit of life in us and as the law of the life of our own spirit in God, may seem to be beside the immediate course of the Apostle's reasoning which we profess to be following. I return to it in the analysis of that *mind of the spirit* which the Apostle describes as being *life and peace.* The mind of the spirit, which St. Paul contrasts with that of the flesh, is in the first place, according to him, based upon the reality of an objective fact, — the fact of a consummated and accomplished act in Jesus Christ. When just before he had summed up his vivid account of man's natural condition in the exclamation, O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? — the great change of mental attitude and feeling found instantaneous and decisive expression in the words, I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. The new spiritual status is accepted as solidly founded and completely established in an act or fact which has existence as yet solely in the personal experience of the One Man who before God represents all men. Jesus Christ had in Himself, in

the unique achievement of His individual manhood, broken the bands and abolished the slavery of sin and death.

The second point in the mind of the spirit is necessarily the recognition of the significance of that objective act or fact for ourselves, or the relation of our spirit or spiritual status to the deliverance or redemption wrought in our common humanity by the individual act of Jesus Christ. The truth of the relation in question may be expressed as follows: The act of divine redemption wrought in Jesus Christ is — representatively, potentially, and really — an act of God wrought in humanity; and conversely the act of self-redemption accomplished by our Lord in His humanity is in all respects similarly an act of humanity wrought in God; that is to say, in the love and grace and fellowship of God, as realized and manifested in the person of Jesus Christ. This relation of Christ and His act of redemption to us, and of us to Him and it, is, according to St. Paul, the divinely significant truth of Baptism. Baptism is an act of God relating us to Christ and to Christ's redemptive act. It not only makes us one with Him, but it makes His death to sin our death to sin and His life to God our life to God. This, one might say, is only representative. But God never merely represents; His representation is always at the very least potential of reality; and in this case all it wants and awaits is our realization through faith to make it reality in ourselves. St. Paul knows himself after his baptism only in Christ; but he knows no

Christ but Him crucified, — Christ's death not only the representation but the power and the reality of his own death to sin, as Christ's life is of his own risen life to God. The substance of Christianity is indeed to realize our baptism.

The mind of the spirit cannot but recognize two senses, or at any rate two widely separated stages of meaning, in that word *to realize*. In its entirety, and in its fulness of meaning even here, it means to bring to reality or to make real. What a truth it is that we realize ourselves, accomplish our end and destiny, in Jesus Christ! What a meaning it gives to faith to know that there is positively no limit to its function and power to realize or actualize God's Word to us; that God's Word to us, which is Christ Himself, is not only as full of meaning, but as full of power, and not only as full of power or potentiality, but as full of actuality or reality to us and in us, as our faith will make it, or will suffer it to be! It is literally true that in the things and life of the spirit it is with us precisely and exactly *according to our faith*. Our faith is the measure of ourselves. There would be no impossibility in an instantaneous sanctification or even glorification, if there were none in an instantaneous perfection of faith. But faith like every other human faculty is a thing of growth and progress. We might be made like Christ in a moment, if we could know Christ in a moment or a day. But to know Christ is to know ourselves and sin, and God and holiness. To realize, then, our baptism in the fullest sense would be to bring to

reality through faith all God's grace to us in Christ, not only a representative or potential but an actual and completed death to sin and life to God; nothing less than that can be the meaning and end of all true repentance and faith. But seeing, in the thing itself and in ourselves, the impossibility of such an immediate realization of God's gift of life in Jesus Christ, we fall back necessarily upon a lower form of realization, a realization, as I have expressed it, not in the attainment of fact but in the proleptic appropriation of faith.

To know oneself is not necessarily to know oneself unto perfection. There is none of us who does not know himself, as himself, although the best of us knows but little of his whole self. So any one of us may not only know his life in Christ, but may know that his life is complete in Christ, although as yet he may know very little of all that is to be known of either Christ or himself. It is not a spiritual impossibility, or even difficulty, to know this much; that the change from spiritual death to spiritual life has got to take place in ourselves and to be an act of ourselves; that it has to be an attitude on our part towards sin whose meaning and end can be nothing less than a death of sin to ourselves or of ourselves to sin, or on the positive side an attitude towards God and holiness whose only end can be the life of holiness in ourselves; that that is just precisely what Jesus Christ not only means but is; and that Jesus Christ is not only God's revelation to us but God's realization in us of all that He is in Him-

self. What do we mean when we say that repentance and remission of sin are preached to us in His name, or in Him? Is it not, that we see in Him a divine grace and power of repentance unto the death to sin, and of faith unto the life of holiness? What do we mean when we speak of Him as the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost? Is it not that we are baptized in Him with a divine grace and power to die His death to sin and live His life to holiness and God? What though an eternity may be profitably occupied with bringing this truth to its full reality, to being perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect, to knowing Christ as He is and being made like Him, — what we may be thus forever realizing in fact may we not at once realize in at least implicit and ever unfolding thought, in a faith that shall be forever shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day? It is this forereaching power of faith, to see the end already in the beginning and to possess the gift in the promise, that religion makes such valuable use of. What if we had to wait for the possession and enjoyment of its gifts until the end! On the contrary it is only through foreknowledge and desire and pursuit and assured confidence and ultimate attainment of it, in other words it is only as it has been from the beginning an end of faith and hope, that the end itself can become to us at last one of actual realization in fact. So it is that our present spiritual status is one of faith and hope, and that not alone our justification, or perfect acceptance in Christ for all He is, but everything that is to be ours in fact

in Christ is already ours in faith in Him; and in the confident faith of man as in the assured grace of God, whatever may be predicated as true of him is predicable *as though* true of us. God's Word to faith and God's Spirit working in and through faith will as assuredly fulfil themselves in the realm of spirit, as when in that of nature God said, Let there be light, and there was light.

The mind of the spirit rests upon an objective fact, upon an act of life which has been accomplished before it and for it, and which carries in it not only the full meaning but the efficient potentiality and the ultimate realization and reality of its own actual life in God. The relation of the human spirit to that act of life in Christ is one primarily of faith. It is the privilege and province of faith to see in Christ God revealed in the life of man and man realized in the life of God. There is nothing that can intervene between the spirit and that fact, except the spirit's own want of faith in it. Where the faith exists, nothing separates it in degree or in time even from the completeness of the fact but its own finite limitation and its need of growth from finitude to infinity. But faith is already fact, where it rests upon fact however at present above and beyond it. We are partakers with Christ, we are partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our hope steadfast unto the end. But the mind of the spirit is no mere quiescent or acquiescent state; it is no resting still and satisfied in a condition of objective salvation, a salvation for or instead of its own. It is the highest energy or activity of the spirit itself. It is,

as the Apostle describes it, the actual working within us of the law of the Spirit of life, or of the law of the life of the spirit. Life is the busiest and most active thing in the world, and the life of God in the spirit of man has a great and endless task before it, — nothing less than to know Christ and be like Him, perfect as God Himself is perfect.

However inchoate and imperfect the present life of the spirit, it is already not only life but peace, when it knows that it is working straight along the lines as well of the perfect truth of itself as of the eternal truth of God. Faith, as we have seen, is then indeed the greatest power when it rests in that which is itself the greatest power to the truest ends of life. And not only such a power but the only such power is the power of God working through human faith unto human salvation. And human salvation is nothing else or less than living the life of God and working the work of God. It may be very pertinently asked, What *is* the life of the spirit here apart from the life of the flesh? — using the flesh, as I think we may, not in its acquired bad sense, but as St. Paul himself, for example, uses it when he says, The life I now live in the flesh I live in the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. I think we may illustrate how we may live the life of the spirit without withdrawing from the flesh, or from the world, in their truer and normal sense, or without taking refuge in so-called other-worldliness. Is there anything overstrained in our Lord's demand that in all things we shall seek first

God's kingdom and righteousness, and in His promise that then all things else shall be added to us? There are in every act in the flesh or in the world, in their indifferent or colorless sense, two parts — the act itself and the spirit of the act, or what the *act* is and what the *man* is in the act. Now surely no one will deny that in any act or human activity the important thing is the man himself, or what spirit, or spiritual quality and character, he is of. Can any other greatness or success in the act really compensate for its not being a right act, or for the man being unrighteous in it? So far from life in the spirit, while we are where and as we are, meaning a life of abstraction from life in the flesh and in the world, I hold that any such life is for us as inconceivable as it is impossible. Life in the spirit means abstraction from the flesh and the world precisely in the sense and in the degree in which these are actually sinful, or are contradictory of the real and true life of the spirit or of the man himself. To go yet further, I have contended that as we are constituted and placed in the world our holiness or divine life are as much conditioned by one actual attitude, as our sin and spiritual death consist in another and the opposite attitude, towards the flesh and the world as they are. In other words, so far as our experience and knowledge can yet go, our present relation to the flesh and the world is as necessary to our holiness or our life of the spirit, as it is the cause or occasion of our sinfulness or our indulgence in the lusts of the flesh.

How life in the spirit is in itself life and peace will perhaps better appear if we consider how life in the flesh is in itself death. That life in the flesh is sin does not mean that the flesh in itself is sinful. This may be made clear by an analogy. Men of modern scientific mind speak of what we have called original sin as "our brute inheritance." Accepting, for the sake of illustration, the phrase and what it denotes, — what of brute or animal nature man inherits as the raw material of his earthly life is not in itself evil. On the contrary, it is quite the proper stuff out of which to make himself or his manhood. Whether one makes a man or a beast of himself depends upon the use he makes of identically the same material. Just the same appetites, desires, affections, and passions which controlled by freedom and conformed to reason make the man and invest him with all his virtues, not so controlled and conformed keep him back in the life of his brute ancestry and constitute what we call his bestiality. Our vice does not consist in the fact that we are first animals, but in the fact that we do not become afterwards men. Virtue consists in the addition or application of reason and freedom to the life and activities of the animal nature. Quite in analogy with this, Christianity stands to us for a yet higher reach or stage of human life. As our natural manhood consists in our no longer living in or according to our lower animal nature but in or in accordance with the higher human endowment of reason and free will, so the spiritual manhood imparted to us in Jesus

Christ consists in our no longer living in ourselves, in our natural or mere human power, but in the completeness of personal oneness with God into which in Christ we are admitted. The natural manhood which we thus renounce for the spiritual one is no more sinful in itself or in its order than the animal nature that preceded it. We do not say that the flesh, in the sense of our natural manhood, is sinful, but only that no man can in the flesh be sinless. However blameless an animal is in doing so, the man who abides in his animal nature cannot be other than a vicious being; and however necessary and high a thing man may be in himself and in the exercise of his human endowments and powers, the man who remains in these and will not go up higher into personal union and alliance with the divine and universal Source of all holiness, righteousness, and eternal life, condemns himself to live in a lower world of sin and death. The mind of the flesh is death, for the simple reason that the things that make for and that constitute life are not in or of or by the flesh but come from beyond or above it. The soul that knows nothing of faith or prayer or grace, of that union and communion with God which becomes visible to us and participable by us in Christ, of the holiness which is God's own Spirit and nature and breath of life in us, — knows not all that of which, as the knowing is in itself life and peace, so the not knowing is of itself sin and death. To know God is the only real life as to serve Him is the only true freedom.

XIX

THE REDEMPTION OF THE BODY

And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you.

So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to usward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only so, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body. — Romans VIII. 10–23.

XIX

THE REDEMPTION OF THE BODY

The Apostle begins a discussion in which the body is the leading subject with the words, If Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness; and ends it thus, We who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption (the consummation of our sonship), *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

However real and thorough one's spiritual apprehension and acceptance of Jesus Christ, however complete one's spiritual self-identification with Christ, the new divine life of the spirit is not *ipso facto* or at once communicated to and made that of the body. A man may be full of an initial faith, hope, and love, which are the signs and activities of the Spirit of God and of the new life of his own spiritual self; he may have so appropriated to himself the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ as to be before God justified through Him; and still he not only may but will long be aware that the new life of his spirit is very far as yet from being correspondingly the life of his body. On the contrary, he will, and the more in proportion to his

earnestness and sincerity, discover to his cost that however the spirit in him may be life because of righteousness (because as yet of the righteousness of Christ, not his own), the body in him is still dead because of sin. But, the Apostle goes on to say, if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you. We cannot exclude from the ultimate operation of this promise the physical resurrection of our bodies in a future life; but the promise has a much more immediate application than that to the spiritual business of our life now and here. Taken in its narrower bearing within ourselves it is a promise to the natural in us too that it shall be taken up into the glory of the spiritual. And taken in its wider sweep of prophecy it means that the whole natural order of which man is the head, in what we call Adam, was predestined and is destined to be taken up and included in the higher spiritual order of which man is still the head in Christ.

With regard to the narrower view indicated above, or the assurance that if Christ is in us spiritually He will also be in us naturally, or in other words that He who has given us spiritual life in Christ will also quicken us into natural or bodily life in Him, it is to be observed that the agent in both these acts or operations is the Spirit of God and of Christ. This would seem to indicate that the promise to the body is, primarily at least, not that of mere physical continuance

of life after death but that of spiritual participation, here and more perfectly there, in the higher life of the spirit. In other words, the promise is that the life of God revealed and communicated to us in Christ, into which the spirit of man may enter at once through faith and hope, or what we call justification, shall by another and slower process, which we shall have to describe as sanctification, become the life of the body also. And the body thus sanctified or spiritualized will be the spiritual body, — any physical change or progress to ensue in "the body that shall be" being intimately associated with the spiritual change that has preceded and induced it.

There is an older analogy which may assist our understanding of the process just described. There is nothing of rationality or of morality *in itself* in our animal nature, and yet by the exercise in it and upon it of the higher human reason and freedom the animal nature may be rationalized and moralized. According to Aristotle the reason and the free personal will are or constitute the *man*, as such, or as differentiated from his lower, vegetable and animal, natures. There is a pure or intellectual, dianoetic, virtue of the reason itself — the rational faculty, by means of which we see and know things as they are and as they ought to be — and this pure virtue of the reason we may call Wisdom. But there is another, practical or applied, virtue which does not reside in the reason itself, although that is its origin and source, but within the animal appetites, desires, and passions, to which it

has been communicated by discipline and habit. So that in the truly virtuous man not only is the reason itself a right reason, and the will a strong and free will, but the very animal nature itself has become, as I said, rationalized and moralized, or made virtuous. Such a man has not by the continuous exercise of his reason and will to make or keep himself moral or virtuous. The animal in him has itself become so, and is so of itself. And that process is the making of the man. The animal nature is the stuff or material out of which in the exercise of his personal endowments of reason and freedom he constructs himself, he molds and shapes his life, his character, his destiny.

Let us apply a similar reasoning to the matter before us. As it is the function of the reason to rationalize or moralize the animal in us, so is it the function of the spirit to spiritualize or sanctify the natural in us. The right reason or wise man sees and knows things as they are and ought to be, but the man is actually rational or wise only as he has impressed his reason or wisdom upon the raw material of his animal nature, that is, upon his appetites, desires, affections, and passions. The reason is the man, — but not so long as it is with him only the abstract or theoretical reason. It is the man in proportion as it has become concrete and practical in all his body, parts, and passions, for apart from these the man has no real existence. The meaning of the spiritual in us is well expressed by the poet, whose language we take the liberty of extending or generalizing a little: Ourselves are ours, we know

not how; ourselves are ours to make them God's. Through reason and freedom we become ourselves and our own. Through the Spirit and our own spirits we make ourselves and our own — God's; and so make God our own and ourselves. It is necessary that we shall become ourselves; but it is then no less necessary that we shall transcend ourselves, for in fact we never become ourselves until we have grown up from ourselves into oneness with God. The spirit, or the spiritual, in man sees and apprehends in Jesus Christ God in himself and himself in God. Jesus Christ is to him God his righteousness, God his life. Yet more truly than that the reason is the man, may we say that the spirit of the man is the man; the reason is the man in himself, the spirit is the man in God. What the spirit of the man is, the man is; and when the man in spirit, or in faith, truly sees and knows himself in Christ, God sees and knows him in Christ. But a mere ideal or theoretical faith or being in Christ goes no further than a mere intellectual wisdom or pure reason. It is only applied faith, as it is only applied reason, that is of any practical account. The faith that holds Christ in itself but cannot impart or impress Christ to and upon the nature and the life is not a real faith. And what is the nature or the life of man? Is it not all the animal and the natural or what St. Paul calls the psychical in him? We know nothing of a purely or abstractly spiritual manhood. The spiritual man is a spiritual *man*, not a spiritual something else. He is a man whose manhood, whose

animal and human constitution and nature, have become spiritualized by the indwelling and sanctifying Spirit of God and of Christ, and in them of ourselves. If God in Christ is truly in our faith, and so in our spirit, then He will be in our bodies and in all the motions and activities of our natural lives. It is not in being holy outside and apart from our bodies and bodily lives that we are spiritual men; it is only by becoming holy in and through these that we act by act and step by step become spiritual men. Our bodies, parts, and passions are still the stuff out of which we shape and fashion ourselves. Saints and sinners are made, by opposite processes, out of the same material. Whatever our future bodies are to be, the part which the Holy Spirit has to perform in determining them takes place largely here, and it consists in the daily discipline of spiritualizing our natural affections, our bodily lives, our earthly and human selves. We look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able to subject all things unto Himself. But the fashioning anew of our bodies into the likeness of His is not a future act of physical new-creation, but an ever present act of spiritual new-creation.

We are at once then, psychical or natural men and spiritual men — just as we are at the same time both animal and rational men, however the two may pull apart in us — and the function of the spiritual is not

to sever itself by scission from the natural but to subdue the natural to itself and take it up into its own higher activities and life. Our bodies, too, are members of Christ and temples of the Holy Ghost. The business of human life is to compose the strifes which are not only incident to it but are determinative and constitutive of it. Whether a man shall be animal, or rational and free and human; whether a man will be natural and earthly and of himself only, or spiritual, of God, and divine also, — these are not merely questions, they are the essential and determining issues of human nature, life, and destiny. Man is made to be ever going up higher, taking with him his whole self and leaving behind only the temporary, the accidental, the incomplete, abnormal, or sinful. The natural, the body, in a true sense the flesh, are part of us, and the sin in them consists only in their non-subjection to the spirit. There is no spiritual step, no new breath of the Spirit, no participation of the life of God, no access of holiness, no act or attainment of divine righteousness, that does not require and exact of us some submission or sacrifice of the body, the flesh, our natural selves. This must needs be so, for the reason already given: As sin consists for us only in yielding to the lusts of our fleshly natures or the desires of our earthly selves, so holiness or spirituality originates or exists or acts for us at all only in subduing these lower passions in the interest of higher and holier affections. There is literally no rising for us into our higher selves except over the bodies of our dead lower selves.

The question with any man is not whether the spiritual and the natural man do not coexist and strive for the mastery in him, but only this, which part he himself is of in the strife. Of many, let us hope, there is no doubt of their being on the right side. God knoweth them that are His, and we are encouraged to believe knows many more than are visible to us. Of many, alas, there is too much doubt, or too little doubt, on the wrong side. There can be no question but that in the inevitable issues that so vitally determine our very selves a man must be definitely of one part or the other. If *we* are in doubt, God knows, and as it is with us so it cannot but be for us; we are the determiners of ourselves and our destinies. To be on the one side or the other of that question is to be in the flesh or in the spirit. If we are in the flesh or are living according to the flesh, we are, the Apostle says, going to die, — because the life he speaks of is only in the spirit and through the Spirit of God. If, on the contrary, we are, in the spirit and by the Spirit of God, subduing the flesh or the body, and when necessary mortifying its evil deeds and extirpating its sinful lusts, then we shall live, — because it is in just such victories of our higher over our lower selves that our life affirms and accomplishes itself.

To be ever so little in the spirit must *mean* to be all. If it does so mean, then in God's sight it *is* all. The least of the Spirit of God in us is earnest and pledge of the whole. The first word of the Spirit to us is assurance of the fact of our sonship to God: The

Spirit beareth witness with our Spirit that we are children of God. The earliest consciousness and utterance of that fact is properly an infantile one — a cry — Abba, Father! Thank God, we have not to wait to know all it is going to mean and to involve to be son of God in the end in order to be already sons of God in the very beginning. It is through being sons of God that we are enabled to become sons of God; if, on the contrary, we had to become in order to be, we should never be sons of God. For it is a far and a long cry from the Abba, Father of our infancy in Christ to our maturity in Him, from the small beginning of our faith to the final attainment of our fruition. But if we are children, we shall be heirs. All that we are in faith only we shall be no less in fact also. All that sonship now only means to us it shall completely be to us. The inheritance which now is Christ's only, but shall be no less ours also when we shall have learned to know Him as He is and been made like Him, — it is no mere participation in any outward state or condition, it is no physical transformation wrought from without in ourselves or our environment; it is what we ourselves shall be when Christ shall be no longer faith to us but fact in us, when God shall have wrought in us what He has wrought in Him — in Him as only the first-fruits of ourselves, the first-begotten from the dead, our forerunner and leader. For observe carefully the condition upon which we shall inherit: If children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him.

As to the sufferings with Christ which are not only the conditions but the means of our being glorified with Him, we are to remember that it is only in the light of our Lord's own sufferings, and of the new meaning and virtue He gives them, that they are spoken of as they are in the Gospel. As the sufferings of Christ abound unto us, even so our comfort also aboundeth through Christ. Sufferings are not in themselves, and by no means to all, means of exaltation. Only in one way or event do they become or are they made so, — when they are used by God and received by ourselves in the direct line of their final cause or purpose. The difficult or painful or variously trying experiences inseparable from human life are the sole conceivable, if not the sole possible, means of determining as well as of testing or proving the personal or spiritual quality of human life. As has been more than once said, so far as our own spiritual characters are concerned, as touching the vital issues of vice or virtue, sin or holiness, the conditions of one are identically those of the other. Virtue and vice, or holiness and sin, are opposite attitudes and actions towards the same things, and it is only in relation with the things which occasion them that, for us at least, they can originate or exist. If there were no occasion for cowardice there would be none for courage, and there could be no courage. If there were no powerful temptation to sin there would be no powerful incentive to holiness, and we should not know what holiness means. To Christ, and to the spiritual man, all the

experiences of life, so far as they are trials at all, are simply parts of the one question of sin or holiness, which is the question of life or death. The so-called mystery of evil precisely as it is in the world is the only solution, because it is the necessary condition, of all the true good of the world. For good, spiritual, moral, or personal, is the overcoming of evil. We shall not know Jesus Christ or ourselves, until we learn for ourselves that all the comfort of life, all its strength, victory, and blessedness, comes only through the sufferings of Christ.

The sufferings of this present time are indeed not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed. The affliction seems light and but for a moment which is working for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory. But this is so only as, with our Lord, we are looking not at the things that are seen, but at things that are not seen. That is to say, as we are seeing deep into the meaning and looking far to the end of human experience. For — the Apostle goes on to say — the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. The creation here is the natural creation, or what we call nature, meaning primarily at least the natural part in ourselves. We ourselves, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Our adoption, meaning here the completion or consummation of our divine sonship, waits upon the final release of the body too, the admis-

sion of all our natural selves into the liberty of the holiness and life of God. Christ in faith, or in the spiritual man, waits upon and is only complete in Christ in fruition or fact, in the natural man, — meaning by the natural man all that is essential and permanent in our natural selves, the reason made right and the will become free, the desires all purified and the affections refined and sanctified. For I repeat that we shall be no longer ourselves or men, if to be spiritual means to cease to be natural, and is not rather the spiritualizing or divinizing and so the glorifying or spiritually perfecting of the natural, which is ourselves.

The natural in us, our nature, became subject to vanity not of itself but through us, or by our act. Sin originates not in our nature, or in our body, but in ourselves. It is distinctively not a thing or quality of the nature but of the person. But sin immediately and deeply involves the nature or the body, because while it is not of these it is in and through them. They are the sole means and instruments of it, and reap the corruption and curse of it. The promise and the hope is that as the body or nature was subjected to sin and made the instrument of it, not of itself or its own will, so by being subdued to and made the instrument and servant of holiness it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God. That is the burden of the Apostle's earnest exhortation to us, Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof; neither present your members unto sin as

instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

St. Paul would seem to teach that what the spiritual is to the natural in ourselves, spiritual humanity is to nature in general. The whole natural order is but the body and organ of a spiritual order which it exists in order to serve. Even what we call natural evil, the seeming sin of nature, exists not for itself but for spiritual ends beyond and above itself, of which we can see enough to divine if not always interpret the rest. Spiritual good would be impossible in a world in which there was nothing of natural evil; that is, of what we call natural evil, for natural evil is often the truest spiritual good, if not the condition and means of all spiritual good. Suppose that instead of things as they are, or as they appear, there were on the contrary not only no evil in fact but — what one would then suppose ought to and would be the case — none in semblance. Would there then be any virtue or any righteousness? And if it is answered that there must always be the semblance, if not the possibility or actuality, of evil, — then I say that that semblance is itself the evil and a very real one.

But in reality there is nothing evil but spiritual evil, but evil in the spirit or in the will. The whole world of nature, of natural creation, becomes evil or good with ourselves. It is all evil because we are all evil, and it will become all good when we are all good. As long as we are sinners, it is the condition and

occasion and instrument of our sin; when we change our attitude and relation to it, it becomes not one whit less the condition and opportunity and instrument to us of all our holiness and righteousness and life. Let us be indeed children of God, and all nature and the whole natural creation shall in due time be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

XX

THE PROCESS OF DIVINE GRACE

By hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

In like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren: and whom He foreordained, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth; who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Even as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we were accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. — ROMANS VIII. 24–39.

XX

THE PROCESS OF DIVINE GRACE

We cannot know the Spirit of God otherwise than in ourselves, as our own spirit, — any more than we can know the divinity in Christ otherwise than as it is revealed in the quality and character of His humanity. We have seen that the first evidence or expression of the presence in us of that Holy Spirit which is the spirit at once of God, of Christ, and, however inchoately, of ourselves, consists in the sense or consciousness of our sonship to God as realized and revealed to us in Christ. We have also seen, however, that there is a great distance between the initial relationship of sons as it begins to exist in faith, and the final consummation of the character of sons as it needs to exist in fact. Everywhere the business or function of spiritual or personal life is to convert meaning into reality, potentiality into actuality. Because we are in a sense rational and free by nature, we have in another sense to become rational and free by act and character. The having been made sons of God does not absolve us from the lifelong task of becoming, or making ourselves, sons of God. The task of realizing ourselves presupposes selves in us to realize, but we shall never be ourselves without the self-realization.

The process of realizing our sonship to God, through the grace of God working with us both objectively and subjectively, is portrayed in the chapter we are studying. On our part there is first the incipient act of faith, the apprehending that for which we were apprehended by Jesus Christ, the seizing in advance by faith all that is to be made ours by act and in fact. However clear and real this first-fruit of the Spirit is in us — indeed just in proportion as it is clear and real — we at once begin to groan within ourselves, desiring and expecting the realizing and consummation of our sonship, *to wit*, the redemption of our bodies. We have entered upon the rightfully difficult task of making our bodies as well as our spirits members of Christ and temples of the Holy Ghost, — that is to say, of becoming, through all our natural selves *de facto* as well as *de jure*, sons of God. It is rightly a difficult and a painful task, because the difficulty and the pain are a necessary part of the process. We become persons at all, we attain all the virtue, the holiness, the glory and the blessedness, of personality, only through pain and difficulty. St. Paul does not exaggerate the necessity, the wisdom, the power, the glory of the Cross. He does not insist too constantly or too strongly that we shall only be glorified with Christ as we know here how to suffer with Christ. He only declares that all the possible suffering of this present time is not worthy of consideration when compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us; that these light afflictions which are for a moment are working out in us a far more

exceeding and eternal weight of glory. As long as we are here we are necessarily under stress of the process of becoming, of making ourselves even as we are being made, sons of God. We are saved in hope, by faith not by sight. But if we really believe in and hope for that which we cannot see, then can we with patience wait for it.

Meantime, with us as with our Lord before us, the gloom that shuts out sight and throws us back upon faith and hope will often so thicken as to obscure even the immediate next step. We will not know so much as what to pray for as we ought. Our voice will be incapable of uttering anything more than inarticulate groanings. But the darkness that is so dark to us is no darkness with God. The soul of the believer is sometimes in heaven and sometimes in hell, but it is as safe in one as in the other: If I go down into hell, behold, Thou art there also! The point is that the process of our redemption is not all our own, and it goes on by methods not all or always understood by ourselves. We are often nearest when we think ourselves farthest off, and farthest off when we think ourselves nearest. God reads order where we see only confusion; our groanings that cannot be uttered are the intercessions of the Holy Ghost to Him for us, and however unintelligible to us it is all clear to Him whose, after all, are all the wisdom and the power of our salvation.

The function of the Holy Ghost is to bring the soul to God, to prepare it to enter into His love and purpose

concerning it. The soul thus touched with divine love and admitted into the eternal meaning and purpose of God and itself, all things else must of necessity work with it for good. From the subjective preparation by the Spirit the Apostle passes to the objective array of the all things that from without work together for eternal life with the soul so prepared to work with them. And first of all there is the great objective fact of God Himself eternally and infinitely for it and with it. From the eternity of the past stands first on our side the fact of the divine foreknowledge. The creation of which Man is the manifest head and end exists from and for Intelligence, Reason. We may trust God equally for having known what He was about from the beginning and for having entered upon nothing inconsistent with Himself. His foreknowledge or wisdom was not divorced from His love.

Next, therefore, for us and with us stands the divine forepurpose. Whom God foreknew them He also foreordained or predestinated. Their end was as clear before Him as their beginning and was just as much the concern of the eternal love which is Himself. We are no more objects than we were products of chance. Human personality is too great and precious a thing to have been brought into existence through the travail of the ages without a definite and predetermined purpose, without a destiny commensurate with its acquired and inherent possibilities and promises. Jesus Christ is the sole adequate expression of the divine reason, meaning, and end of human personality.

Whom God foreknew, He also foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son. He is in Himself the realization and revelation of the divine sonship which is the meaning and proper destination of us all, the heavenly pattern shown us in the mount after which our common humanity is to be builded into the tabernacle of the eternal divine presence and indwelling. But Jesus Christ is revelation to us not only of the fact of our divine sonship but of the process by which that sonship is realized. His death and resurrection is the necessary baptism of that new birth; through it alone is He the first-born among many brethren, and through it alone can they share His new birth and life.

Whom God thus foreknew and foreordained, them He also called. There is a deep significance in the fact of the divine call as a necessary moment in the process of human salvation. It is the reference of the matter of eternal life to the action upon it of the man himself. Salvation must needs come to us as a divine invitation or call; it must needs be subject to our own acceptance. Our part, however secondary and subordinate to the divine part, is nevertheless the determining factor. But both parts, in all the necessity and importance of each, are emphasized in the nature of the call. With St. Paul Christianity is in every moment of it a call — a call from God and a call upon ourselves. Not only was he himself called to be an apostle, but every believer is called to be a saint. As there is no official apostleship so there is no personal sanctity except such as comes from God, that to which God

calls and appoints or admits us. But equally there is none for us which we do not ourselves accept and assume. The called according to St. Paul are only those in whom both these conditions have been fulfilled, who have been not only called of God to life or office or task but have heard and responded and are in possession or in discharge of that to which they are called. There is no word of God, in the strict or proper sense, except such as is addressed to intelligence or will. A word, properly as such, must be not only an expression of these but an expression to these. The Gospel, which is Jesus Christ Himself, is the final and complete word of God to us, because it is the perfect call, the perfect address and appeal, to everything that is within us, reason, affection, will, character, life, destiny. How all these may be our own, to determine for good or ill, may be incomprehensible to us, but the fact remains. Every true call of nature or of grace is a call to the self that is in us, and a call in respect to which all depends upon the how we hear.

It is only the highest instance and illustration of this, that our Lord is said not to have taken His high-priesthood upon Himself, but only as He was called of God to it. We glorified not Himself to be made a high priest, but He that spake unto Him, Thou art my Son, This day have I begotten thee. His glorification to the highest honour and exaltation of our humanity was indeed His own act and achievement. But, if we may express so glaring a paradox, it was His own act only because of the fact that it was not His own act,

but the act of God in Him. His achievement or attainment in our nature of the perfection of holiness and life was an act only possible for even Him in our nature — first because He was called to it of God, and, secondly, because He perfectly heard and perfectly obeyed the call. It was humanity's supreme act, in Him, of perfect faith and perfect obedience — the act by which it at once was made and made itself one with God.

The call of God to us in Jesus Christ is a call first to something immediate and secondly to something ultimate and final. The first is a present status or relation to God which St. Paul describes as this grace wherein we stand, our access or entrance into which, he says, we have had through our Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and the expression of which on our part he describes as a present peace with God. The truth which St. Paul's own use warrants us in designating *justification by faith* turns upon two points — the first being that God's act of human redemption and completion in Jesus Christ is revealed to our faith as potentially the redemption and completion of us all; and the second being that it is the function and obligation of faith to see ourselves so redeemed and completed in Jesus Christ. God's Word, which is explicitly Jesus Christ Himself, is the all-sufficient ground of the obligation of faith to see and accept what God reveals and gives in Him. What is true of us in Christ, who is the truth of us all, is to us as though it were already true of us in ourselves. The immediate effect of this is that

where our faith truly answers to the divine grace, we are to God even as Jesus Christ Himself is, in whom He already sees us. Or rather in Jesus Christ Himself even prior to our faith God already sees us, and we have only to open the eyes of our faith to see ourselves there also. He who has this divine vision, whatever the warfare of present condition with him, enjoys already the peace of the faith which brings distant things near and makes future things present. We are not to God only what we have first made ourselves, but what God has by His own grace first made us in Christ, that we are thereby in Him enabled to make ourselves. We are not accepted as sons and righteous through being so, but are enabled to become sons and righteous through being made and treated as such. Of all that is Christ or is Christ's we have divine warrant for saying that we have only truly to believe or to know that it is ours and it is ours. As truly as our Lord could say, All that the Father hath is mine, so truly have we the right to say that all that He Himself has or is is ours.

As whom God calls He justifies, so whom He justifies He glorifies. St Paul knows only, in this positive account of the process of our salvation, the call that is effectual, that is both given and accepted. Consequently he knows of only an effectual justification, where the sonship or righteousness is, in Jesus Christ, equally given and received. Where we truly by faith know ourselves in Christ sons of God, there we cannot but truly in fact and in ourselves become sons of God. True

justification cannot but result in true sanctification. Sanctification is the making ours in actuality all that justification has made ours in potentiality. It is the becoming in ourselves all that God has made us in Christ. That which once for all was made ours and us in Him we need time and process to appropriate and convert to ourselves. Salvation can operate in us only through the natural and spiritual organs and activities of ourselves, our reason or intelligence, our affections and desires, our will, our acts and habits and character and life. The law of the action of all these requires all that time and environment have actually to offer to human experience in human life as it is. Our actual experience is just what we need to become all ourselves in Christ, and our actual environment is just what we need for that experience. There is a divine fitness and propriety, not to say necessity, in all that our Lord had to undergo in order to be perfected in our humanity, and that fitness and necessity applied to Him simply because they pertain to us who were perfected in Him. St. Paul is describing the successive steps or moments in the long process of our salvation in absolute or finished terms, and so he speaks not of our sanctification but of our glorification. But it is an old and true interpretation of the words as used by him to define sanctification as glory begun, or in progress, and glory or glorification as sanctification completed. The whole drama of human spiritual destiny as realized and revealed in Jesus Christ may recall the words of Irenæus with regard to our Lord, *Longam expositionem hominis*

in se recapitulat. In Him the whole course or process is covered, beginning with the divine foreknowledge in the past and ending in the all-accomplished predestination in the future.

What, then, shall we say to these things? The new light that God sheds upon the divine purpose in Christ Jesus reveals the whole creation a connected and consistent scheme having for its end the spiritual evolution and destination of humanity. If God be for us, who or what can be against us? Instructed and enlisted in the divine meaning and purpose of things, there can be nothing that does not definitely and positively work with us and for us. The need is that we be so instructed and enlisted. And the prime difficulty is encountered in the divine mode of human exaltation, — in other words, in the offence or stumbling-block of the cross. If the mystery of wisdom and love, the meaning and process of divine fatherhood and human sonship, has its expression for us in Jesus Christ, how can we account for it that He who is the revelation to us all of the way, the truth, and the life should have been subjected to all, should have been spared naught, of such a human experience as was actually His. The point of the mystery lies just in the fact that God spared not and spares not. That God spares us nothing of all that the actuality of the world has to subject us to is the supreme act and expression of the divine love and wisdom. That there is no real good but personal good, the good of personality, and that, for us at least, there is no personal,

spiritual or moral, good that is not the actual conquest and survival of evil — that is the revelation in Jesus Christ with regard to human life and destiny. For our Lord to have been spared the least of all He endured and overcame, would have been to abridge by just so much the completeness and perfection of His attainment and exaltation. And it was the truth for Him because it is the truth for us, of whom He is the way, the truth, and the life.

The answer to the question of the cross for Jesus Christ, is the answer for us of all questions of the no longer dark or insoluble mysteries of human life. The love that spares not, means on our part the faith and the grace that can endure all and overcome all. Without the former we should never attain the latter, and it is the attaining the latter that is the divine process and test and measure of our human exaltation. He that spared not His Son, and through not sparing glorified and exalted Him, how shall He not, in and with Him, by the selfsame process of unsparing love, bestow upon us all real, spiritual, and eternal good? Jesus Christ is the only and the all-sufficient theodicy. In Him all meanings are revealed, and all divine means justified.

There are two further questions pertaining one to the beginning, the other to the end of God's method and process of grace with us. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? What if God in His love takes sinners, and the chief of sinners, to Himself? The answer is not merely that God in His sovereign

choice justifies whom He will; He reveals more of His secret to us than that. His elect are those who in the exigency of their own hopeless strife with sin and death come to find in Him His grace sufficient for them. Because His grace *is* sufficient, because in the new relation of their present attitude towards Himself He is become their righteousness and their life, therefore He not only sovereignly pronounces them, but potentially makes, and actually will make, them righteous. His justification of them is justified not merely by His arbitrary will, but by all the gracious facts.

And who shall condemn those whom God has so chosen and taken to Himself? Has not Christ died, and risen again? And does not that mean their own death to sin, and their own life to God and holiness? Is not Christ's presence at the right hand of God as their representative and advocate God's pledge and assurance that sin in them as in Him has been condemned and abolished and that there is no longer any ground of condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus?

One further thought concludes the Apostle's survey of the eternal and infinite grace of God in Jesus Christ. There is no hint or suggestion that the earthly experiences, the cross, of Christ are something instead of their own, and not also their own. The hope and assurance is only that in experiences that are His and ours, ours as well as His, nothing shall separate us from Him; that in His temptations we shall know His power and victory; that having suffered with Him in

His death we may be raised up and reign with Him in His life. Who or what shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord? The promise is not exemption from His experiences but salvation and exaltation through His experiences.

XXI

THE CHRIST OF SAINT PAUL

XXI

THE CHRIST OF SAINT PAUL

That St. Paul realizes profoundly the truth of the pre-existence and the deity of our Lord there can be no question. The conviction of it runs through the whole texture of the Apostle's thought and knowledge of Jesus Christ, and is involved in the entire conception of his own and all men's personal relation to Him.

Our Lord, according to St. John, expresses His own personal consciousness of oneness with God in the words, My Father worketh and I work. I and my Father are one. Taken alone, this may affirm nothing more than a perfect moral unity of spirit and activity with God. But it is on the direct line of a deeper truth which finds abundant and definite expression in the life and consciousness of all the teachers of the Gospel in the New Testament. It is contained in the formula so common in the mouth of St. Paul, Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Here and always God and Christ are so united and identified in the common act of divine reconciliation and human redemption that the act of each is the act of the other.

But we cannot limit St. John's or St. Paul's or St.

Peter's direct sense of the oneness of Jesus Christ with God to any particular set or sets of words. It fills all their mind and informs all their thoughts or words about Him. Jesus Christ is the eternal spiritual and personal truth of themselves and of all things; the living creative cause as well as the personal final cause of the universe. He is God in energy or actuality, in nature as well as in grace, in natural creation as well as in spiritual new or higher creation. They go to Jesus Christ after His resurrection as to God; and God has come and comes to them in Jesus Christ as nowhere else. Their Lord is a living Lord, and they themselves are in Him, and He is in them as only God can be.

The best evidence of our Lord's deity lies in the fact of what I think we may rightly call His human universality. The expression is in need of fuller explanation and justification. Our Lord was a man as real and actual as any other in all that constitutes human nature or that makes up human life and experience. The only difference in His case, on the human side, was one of personal action, in the same nature and under identical conditions, different from that of any other man. This difference consists primarily in the fact of a personal holiness so transcending in degree that of all others that in itself it demands a divine explanation. But that is by no means the sole feature in our Lord's humanity which can be only divinely explained. Here, in Him, is a human holiness, righteousness, life, which at once possesses a significance and a value which we can only describe as universal. This is the holiness,

the righteousness, the life, not of one man but of all men. The one man is become all men, just as Adam was not only one but all men. As in Adam we all sin and die, so in Christ we are all made alive, from sin and so from death. By Christ's humanity I mean a humanity now risen, redeemed, united with God and sharing with Him the divinity of which it is capable, the divinity of perfect love, which is holiness and righteousness and eternal life. Things are what they are, independently of any question of how they are so. Christianity is the ultimate and supreme fact of humanity. The life has been manifested and is with us. By that we mean the divine-human life of Jesus Christ; and that life is in the world not the individual life of one man but the universal life of all men. If this be so, then He can be nothing less than God our holiness, our righteousness, our life. For no individual human being can be all that He is to all men. I have somewhere described the New Testament representation of our universal relation to Jesus Christ somewhat as follows:

The life of Jesus Christ is in the New Testament described as ours, in three senses or stages: In the first place it is exemplarily or representatively ours; it is in all points like unto ours, or what ours would be if it were completed according to its divine idea. Under this head it is not only legitimate but necessary to describe the incarnate life of our Lord in the consistently human terms in which we have done so. In the second place, the life of our Lord is ours not only representa-

tively but causally; as He Himself says, Because I live, ye shall live also. He is not only example but cause of life to us all who believe. We see, brought to bear upon humanity in Him, the divine causes and conditions which are alone productive of eternal life; and we are made to experience in ourselves in Him the actual operation of the selfsame causes and conditions which operated humanly in Him. Let anyone read and ponder the description (Eph. i. 19, 20) of the exceeding greatness of the power of God to usward who believe, according to that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead. But, in the third place, Jesus Christ is even more generally described as not merely causally or virtually but really and personally our Life; and we cannot overstate or overvalue the sense or extent in which that is true. Christ is always described as being personally and creatively present in the believer, taking him up into Himself and making Himself his higher personality and life. It is not too much to say with St. Paul that Jesus Christ is not only the divine truth of every man but is the higher and diviner self of every man. So that there is no exaggeration in his, No longer I but Christ; I am dead and Christ lives in me; the lower I of mere nature and self has been lost in the higher I of God. And this higher I of God, which is Christ in me, is the eternally true I; in losing myself I have found myself. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. Christ in us is the hope,

as He will be the consummation, of our glory; which means our self-realization and completion.

Let us consider a little further this universality of the humanity of our Lord. One says, "You lay great stress upon the view that our Lord was not a man, but man. I find this a difficult conception; does it mean that humanity has a concrete real existence apart from the individual persons who are human, and that this Universal becomes visible in Christ? If this be so, does it not lead us to a metaphysical Realism, not now generally held?" The universality of our Lord's humanity is only explicable upon the fact that His personality is a divine one. It is only God in it that can make it applicable to all or the truth of all. And since, according to St. Paul, it is always Christ Himself who brings Himself to us and makes all that is His our own, it follows that, according to St. Paul, Jesus Christ can be to us nothing less than divine. The concrete universal of humanity which may be found in Jesus Christ belongs to it not as humanity but as God in humanity. It is God in it which makes that particular humanity of our Lord, His holiness, His righteousness, His life, valid and available for all; so that every man may find himself in Christ, and in Christ find himself. But, to go further — may we not say, that the only true realism or idealism, the doctrine that the ideal is the real, is to be found in the New Testament doctrine of Jesus Christ? He is the eternal creative idea, the ideal principle, as of everything else so especially of man as the end and heir of all. In

that sense He is humanity from before the foundation of the earth, the Man from Heaven, the Son of man, in whom in the end all humanity and all else in humanity is to come to itself and to be fulfilled. The eternal final cause is first cause as well as *finis;* the divine ideal is the only certain and true real.

I may say a single word in explanation of the act of Christianity in not only identifying Jesus Christ with God, but at the same time distinguishing Him in the Godhead. We do not say ordinarily that Jesus Christ is God, but that He is the Logos or Word or Son of God. No one can enter into the meaning and truth of Christ and Christianity and admit that our Lord is anything less than God. Yet we cannot but feel the difference and the choice between saying that Christ is God in the absolute sense, and saying, more qualifiedly, that He is the Logos or Word of God. He is θεός, but He is not ὁ θεός. The divine Word can never be other than personal or less than God; but neither is He absolutely or exclusively God, in a Monarchian or Sabellian sense.

After all that has been said in the preceding chapters of the necessity of a thoroughgoing acceptance of the humanness of our Lord's earthly life and experiences, it is impossible to pass by the question of the difficulty of combining with that, or even maintaining together with that, the view of His Godhead here no less insisted upon. This may best be realized and considered in a concrete instance of actual experience. One says, "My difficulty is as follows: The agony in the Garden

and the cry of My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? seem to show that our Lord was as personally distinct from God as we ourselves are; that His personality, His self-consciousness and will, was not a divine Personality, but a human; so human as to be capable of losing its hold upon God, just as we may lose our hold upon God. We might take refuge in the thought that this may have been only a later putting into our Lord's mouth of the supposed prophetic language of Ps. xxii. But the cry of dereliction seems to be the most certain of the Words from the Cross, more certain than the Word in which the sufferer regained His hold upon God — Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit."

There is no doubt that we have here expressed a very real difficulty; perhaps an insoluble one, the insoluble one. But let us see what it means or implies. If the extreme experience of our Lord, in the Garden and upon the Cross, was not a veritably human one, what else was it or how else shall we explain it? If we could, with the aid of criticism, get rid of the words in question, would we then be able, and do we want to be able, to construe these experiences of our Lord into some other, non-human experiences? If this was His last and probably greatest temptation, would we wish to prove that He was not here, too, tempted in all points like as we are? What would there be to gain in the being able to feel that this was not a really human temptation and victory, was not the victory, in fine, in which His task of redemption was finished, the victory

in which humanity in His person had overcome the world? In what other terms then should we be able more satisfactorily to construe the meaning of the life and the cross of Jesus Christ?

Yet, assuming, as we must, that our Lord's temptations were to their utmost limit our own temptations and not those of one other than ourselves, are we not involved in the difficulty of a double personality in our one Lord; a divine personality in which He is the very Word of God Himself uttered or expressed in humanity, God self-fulfilled and self-fulfilling in the nature and under the conditions of us all; and on the other hand, too, a human personality which alone can be the real and perfect expression of God humanly self-realized and manifested? We find ourselves under a necessity of seeing in Jesus Christ from beginning to end an act of God in nature and in humanity. In Him God comes to us and is in us, and we come to God and are in Him; all that humanity is in Him is the work of God in humanity, and our part in that work is only what He does and is in us. And at the same time we are under an equal necessity of recognizing in our Lord as in ourselves a human activity the freest and most personal possible, the most determinative and constitutive of our own very selves. The time may come when we shall better state to ourselves this paradox or seeming contradiction, and better too perhaps adapt and fit ourselves to its acceptance; it can never come when we shall be able either to solve it or to reject it.

Is not, however, the whole difficulty already expressed for us in the very word Incarnation; a difficulty which the most of us evade by simply not taking the word seriously, in the fulness and reality of its meaning? In the instance we have been analyzing, what do we see but the disposition common to us all to find in our Lord's temptations experiences that are not human, and in Himself one who was not truly man. The completed work and results of the Incarnation certainly justify it as a fact, but because we cannot comprehend it we hesitate to accept it as a possibility. Unable to construe it to our minds or correlate it in thought, we either reject it altogether or evade it by half or seeming acceptances. It is one of the few ultimate matters in which the whole truth comes to us only through a childlike acceptance of actuality as matter of fact, -- as, for example, the actuality of human freedom in the face of a universal cosmical necessity. The fact of the personal Divine and the personally human at once in the one Person of Jesus Christ has to be accepted, not alone as a fact behind and above our comprehension or construing, but likewise as a fact necessary to any comprehending or construing of the higher facts of both God and ourselves. As we are fairly launched upon the quest, the nearer we pursue it to the end the more are we persuaded that, at least in His relation with us, God is fully and completely revealed to us as God only in Jesus Christ; and equally, that we are our realized and completed selves only in Jesus Christ as God. I cannot construe the Incarnation in all its

necessary coexistences and seeming contradictions either to myself or to others; but infinitely less can I reject the Incarnation without blotting out all eternal truth of the universe and all higher life of ourselves. However far off this, and all similar attempts, may be from solving, or even satisfactorily stating, our difficulties, we must not only for the truth's but for our very life's sake continue such attempts. We must, if only, hold on to and insist upon the opposite and complementary terms of our Lord's deity and His humanity, until we can better correlate them in our minds and approve their coexistent and equal truth to our reason.

Here I leave my exposition of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as St. Paul sees it in Him and knows it in himself. According to St. Paul, as according to St. John and according to the whole mind of the New Testament, Christianity recognizes and accepts in Jesus Christ, not alone the manifestation and revelation, but the communication of God's own divine righteousness and eternal life. The Gospel is not merely a truth, it is a power and an activity. He who is in Jesus Christ is in the actual operation or working of the selfsame forces and causes which made Jesus Christ Himself humanly what He was. Those forces or causes are on one side divine, and constitute all that we express by the general term *grace*. Grace covers all that God Himself is or does in us, all that we experience as His "motions" or designate as His spirit. They are on the other side of them human, and are expressed by the general terms *faith*, obedience, etc. In Jesus we

see, and by Jesus Christ we mean, the divine operating causes, the grace, the *salvatio salvans*, as well as the human elements, the operated effects, the faith and obedience, the *salvatio salvata*. He is the divine as well as the human, God as well as ourselves, in the synthesis of our divine-human righteousness and life, which is our salvation. The mystery of the Incarnation may be permanently a mystery, in the extremest sense of the term, a fact or actuality which reason cannot construe nor language express; but it is the mystery which solves and illumines all others.

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